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Crucibles of Cultural and Political Change: Postmodern Figured Worlds of Tejana/o Chicana/o Activism

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This qualitative and sociohistorical study examines the lives and experiences of Chicana/o educators in Texas and the ideological and political discourses of equity and social justice that they draw from to shape their practice in three educational sites: the Llano Grande Center (LGC), Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia Bookstore (RSA), and the Advanced Seminar in Chicana/o Research (ASCR). I document their work based on the oral narratives of fifteen educators, site document analysis, and ethnographic work I conducted as observant participant associated with these organizations. This project extends recent scholarship that links critical pedagogy, social and cultural theories of identity formation and new social movement scholarship to understand the multiple cultural, social and political dimensions of activist education. My principal findings indicate new senses of individual and collective identity practice, reframed critical and culturally relevant pedagogies, and a reconceptualization of indigenous discourse and practice. These findings have important implications for activists, educators and researchers by rearticulating scholar activist work in new more emancipatory ways that

considers place-based models of critical and cultural relevant teaching and learning and more radically democratic research practices.

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Chapter 1: Autobiographical Sketch and Overview

> The qualitative researcher is not an objective, politically neutral observer who stands outside and above the study of the social world. Rather, the researcher is historically and locally situated within the very processes being studied. A gendered, historical self is brought to the process. This self, as a set of shifting identities, has its own history with the situated practices that define and shape the public issues and private troubles being studied (Denzin, 2001).

INTRODUCTION

I begin my study by providing an overview to my dissertation study that includes in this first chapter an introduction, social context of study, theoretical framework and research design, significance of my research topic and autobiographical sketch. I begin with my autobiographic sketch to provide personal context and capture the personal and political motivations that inspired this research project. This autobiographical sketch traces my political and academic trajectory and mirrors in many ways the stories that I document in my study. Together, I hope that these narratives provide insights about the role of particular cultural and political discourses in their pedagogical work. I document how their work as Chicana/o activist educators in Texas represents new and successful ways of teaching and learning that challenge mainstream forms of schooling.

They do so in part by creating alternative, autonomous spaces of teaching and learning that privilege local cultures and knowledges and challenge the epistemological authority of mainstream educational discourse and practice. I also document how their

work is tied to larger social movement discourses and practices, namely Chicana/o social movement activism and theories which they ground in local contentious struggle for social and educational change. By identifying their practices as Tejano/Chican/o, I seek further nuanced readings of their work that searches for subtlety and difference placing this work in the context of Tejano/Chicana/o social movements.

Through their work with Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia Bookstore (RSA), the Llano Grande Center (LGC), and the Advanced Seminar on Chicana/o Research (ASCR), I argue participants in each of theses spaces are providing models of learning that are truly transformative and emancipatory unlike mainstream approaches that are in fact failing our most marginalized communities in Texas and the US as many of these educators suggest. These educators in fact argue that our contemporary educational practices are further reproducing social and economic inequalities by pushing youth out of the educational system and into our criminal justice system and merely perpetuating the cycle of poverty of these communities of color. I begin by first tracing my own personal and political development as activist scholar that is marked by significant experiences, people and communities. Together they underscore key ideological discourses and practices that made me who I am today and hint at parallel social and cultural processes that similarly impacted many of the participants in this study.

Urrieta's (2009) text on Chicana/o political transformation grounds much of this study's work and asks: How do individuals who had previously called themselves Mexican American undergo an identity shift into Chicana/o consciousness that presumes a more critical and social activist worldview? In some respects, my study parallels Urrieta's study of activist identity and agency in California by tracing my own political involvement in Wisconsin and later in Texas as an educator activist. I situate my

trajectory of political transformation firmly within the Chicana/o movement from the mid 1970s to the present. How did my shift in identity occur as a result of my immersion in Chicana/o activist community and academic spaces? How are Chicana/os made? I suggest some answers to these questions in the following personal sketch that traces significant individuals and experiences that lead to my transformation from those very early experiences sitting by my grandmother and listening to her stories of overcoming hardships through daily struggle and success.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

> We find storytelling as a critical mode through which we conduct our day-to-day work, build our curriculum, and enhance our pedagogies. It also serves as the genre through which we explain the historical context. Storytelling is the way we place ourselves in the middle of the text, as we engage as reflective practitioners (Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008, p. 4).

In this section, I present my personal story in order to put myself in the middle of my research study for reasons that the Guajardos and Casaperalta articulate above in this passage. It is, on the one hand, reflexive gesture that centers the personal and subjective in one's academic work versus more positivist and objectivist approaches to research. In fact, their passage underscores the activist nature of storytelling as methodology for the privileging of experiential knowledge that this work enacts. This is also a way of repositioning ourselves as empowered agents and producer of knowledge, an ability to self author ourselves from the ways that others have authored us.

This short glimpse into my past also throws light on significant experiences, individuals and events that played an important role in my formation as a Chicana/o activist educator. As such, it parallels significant discourses and practices of many of the consultants I interviewed that were instrumental in developing the knowledge, dispositions and skills necessary for becoming a Chicana/o scholar activist. As such, it also provides another level of context for understanding and exploring the meaning of activist intellectual practice in the context of Chicana/o cultural practices and in the context of academic and community spaces and worlds and how these spaces are successfully negotiated.

As I also identify as a scholar activist and Chicana/o, I hope that by reflecting on my experiences over the years provides a personal level of contextualization to my study. Over the many years as a scholar and community educator, I have always strived to bridge these two worlds, to maneuver between academic and community spaces. These personal experiences that I narrate here then attempt to introduce and highlight some of these themes. I capture some of the key discourses and practices that have fundamentally affected the decisions that I have made in my personal life and my academic choices and in doing so underscore parallel social processes that have also impacted my participants. Since I have also acted as an *observant participant* (Vargas, 2008) in these spaces, it helps also helps explain my reason for choosing these sites as well. Stake (2005) for example highlights the intrinsic nature of case study research and how the bulk of case study research is done by researchers with an intrinsic interest in the case(s) and provides for "thick description." This intrinsic interest is not only cultural but political as well since the ultimate outcome of this work is community change, a process of

reculturalization and not traditional school and community reform (Cuban qtd. in Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008).

My narrative also highlights the themes that this study will address and thus serves as personal and historical context for my study. As Delgado Bernal (1998b) has pointed out, our identities and subjectivities as researchers are intimately connected to the knowledge we produce so we must strive to be as transparent as possible about our theoretical and methodological standpoints and positionalities. In addition, as researchers we must strive to continually engage in reflexive analysis on how our social locations shape our research (Harding, 2004; Harstock, 2004; Haraway, 1991; Lather 1991). Behar (1996) also argues that serious collaborative ethnography can utilize personal experiences to elaborate the larger ethnographic project, especially if done critically.

Using one's personal voice that also critically examines intellectual and emotional connections between researcher and participant can yield important insights for identifying difference or similarities between our experiences and our memories and histories (pp. 13-14). Finally, Stanton-Salazar (2001) articulates the notion of *confianza* to explain how Mexicano/Latino communities use the construct of *confianza* as a cultural tool or practice to establish trusting relationships and shared expectations "for ongoing exhange, mutual generosity and reciprocity …" and cultural means to resist disciplining institutional forces (p. 28). This autobiographic sketch is my way of extending *confianza* to the consultants and readers of this study as a gesture of collaboration and politically as an effort of counterstratification (p. 19).

Fine and Weiss (2005) argue that researchers must be multiply positioned, able to move between "theory in the clouds" and life "on the ground". This balancing act for scholar activists like myself is not always an easy negotiation since the ontological and

epistemological demands from these usually disparate worlds are not usually commensurable and generally contradictory. For example, the kind of academic based outcomes generally expected by universities of their scholars don't necessarily jibe with those expectations demanded by community initiatives. Community projects expect immediate and concrete results and real solutions and not necessarily a set of refereed journal articles read by few intellectuals.

My story begins with my grandparents who, like many other families of Mexicana/o decent in the U.S., were part of a mass migration and *disapora* of Mexicana/o peoples around the turn of the twentieth century. They migrated and settled in San Antonio and worked as laborers like many other recently migrated Mexicana/os who had been displaced by the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This Mexicana/o diaspora has been chronicled by many historians (Acuna, 1988; Montejano, 1987; Limon, 1992; Rodriguez, 2011) who also chronicle how these newly immigrated Mexicanos were disproportionately relegated to the lowest rungs of the labor hierarchy due to race and class discrimination and generally white supremacist practices. My grandfather worked as a manual laborer and my grandma worked as a pecan sheller to make ends meet. Later they moved up the social ladder to work as migrant laborers, then considered an move up the social ladder for Mexicana/os who faced very limited work options.

Access to education was also limited for these new immigrants and my grandparents fared no better; my grandpa Cuco had no formal schooling, my grandma Viola attained "only" 2nd grade education. Formal education was a luxury to my grandparents and their children as it was to most other working class Mexicana/os because children were needed as laborers to bring in vital income for their families. Migrant farmworking was especially challenging work and because of its highly mobile

nature prevented their children to attend school. As the oldest of six siblings, my dad worked alongside his parents in the campos for 12-14 hour a day or more for six months of the year following the migrant labor stream to the Midwest. He dropped out of school after graduating from middle school in order to contribute to family income as was the case for many Mexicana/os in the mid 1940s to 1950s. He had worked alongside my grandparents from the time he was at least twelve years old and I remember with mixed emotions the stories he told about how they struggled to pull long canvas bags up and down the rows of cotton fields, that when full, weighed close to one hundred and twenty pounds.

Despite only a second grade education, my grandmother valued the importance of education and constantly admonished us to stick to our schooling, despite the fact she had to work from an early age and received very little formal schooling herself. I remember her *cuentos* about her experiences in school that although short lived, elicited fond memories about her love for school. I asked one time why she had only attained a second grade education and grandpa no education. She replied simply, *no teniamos tiempo*, we didn't have the time or luxury. Even though she only attended two years, she bragged that she was an excellent student. It was clear that she relished those experiences that had obviously left a strong imprint because she recalled those memories with such clarity even into her mid 1990s. But there were also stories she told me that brought back memories of hardship as she recalled having to leave school to work to support her family at the age of 8.

I had read about similar stories in historical accounts or in the literature I read about the Mexicana/o migrant diasporic experiences, but when my grandmother shared it with me in her matter of fact style, it especially pained me. Her personal accounts

resonated with the stories I have heard in my Chicana/o studies classes that have become part of the collective memories of Mexicana/o and Chicana/o migrant diasporic peoples. My grandparents were part of the Mexicana/o *diaspora* begun by the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Mexicanos as a result of the Mexican Revolution. As migrant laborers, they also became part of the Tejano *diaspora* that continued throughout the 1950s, traveling throughout the US in search of work, and surviving the extreme hardships that of such challenging work. As some labor historians have documented, conditions for migrant families like my grandparents and parents persisted throughout the early and mid 20th century until agricultural labor unions, Mexicana/o cultural organizations and later, the Chicana/o labor, cultural and civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s help to dramatically improved conditions for these communities (Acuna, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010).

The stories that my grandmother shared with me were part of an incipient critical consciousness that would later coalesce in college where I became policitized in student and community activist work. The stories and *cuentos* that narrated my grandmother's experiences of struggle and agency represent what some scholars have referred to as "funds of knowledge," those everyday resources, bodies of knowledge, strategies and action that our people draw from to survive and prosper at home and community (Moll, 1992). Moll describes them as "mediating structures" that families use to make sense of their world using historically and locally developed skills, ideas, and practices. For Mexicana/o families like mine, these bodies of knowledge require that we successfully navigate two distinct worlds, Anglo and Mexicana/o, in order to guarantee our successful functioning and well-being (Moll, 2001, Greenberg, 1989; Veléz-IbáÑez & Greenberg, 1992)

An important part of Mexicana/o funds of knowledge are the networks of support that were developed by migrant families like ours between Texas and the Midwest as they traveled the migrant stream between these two regions. These networks of *familia* and friends provided the support to meet the challenges of a sometimes hostile Anglo world in order to survive. The lessons I learned from my grandparents and parents about survival in the face of sometimes overwhelming obstacles I believe also helped me to deal with the challenges I faced in public school. While my public school experiences were generally positive, I was strong student academically and active in sports providing me with strong social and cultural capital, I still faced challenges later when I was nearing graduation and preparing for college.

Although I was a good A/B student, my SAT test scores were average probably due to the lack of preparation in our vocational oriented high school with an academic curriculum not geared not towards college preparation. My high school was located in South San Antonio, a predominantly working class side of town and my neighborhood was probably split 50/50 ethnically along Anglo and Mexicana/o lines. Our side of town was closer in class and race makeup to the westside barrios than the richer northsiders of San Antonio where the more wealthy, and white, communities lived in the mid 1970s when I was in school. These northside neighborhoods also provided the social, economic and political leadership for San Antonio at the time although the civil rights movements of the 1960's were already beginning to impact the power dynamics of local politics to some degree.

Despite facing lesser educational opportunities than my fellow northside students, I was still motivated to attend a major Tier 1 university and had applied to Stanford, Princeton, UT Austin, Trinity University and UW Madison. I was accepted at Trinity and

UW and chose the latter for their strong financial aid package and because I was eager to leave the state. I owe my acceptance to UW in major part to the support of a Latina counselor who spent a few days a week at my high school promoting Big Ten schools who at the time were actively recruiting Chicana/o and Mexicana/o students. Like other Big Ten schools, UW Madison had established a program called the Five Year Plan targeting minority students that provided generous financial and academic support. These and other college programs had been created in universities and colleges as a direct result of the social and civil rights movements of the 1960s. However, despite my acceptance to two major colleges, I received little support from other counselors at my school to attend UW. In fact, I was told by my study room advisor that I should instead attend a local community college in San Antonio instead of UW because I would most certainly fail because he felt I could not match the stiff academic competition of students from the Midwest.

It was then that I drew upon the wisdom and *ganas* of my grandparents and parents who in the face of difficult odds had persevered and succeeded and whose stories of struggle I drew from to prove these counselors wrong. I reacted emotionally to these challenges and to suffering and struggle that my grandmother had shared with me in her stories and used that pain and anger as an affective resource in a way that convinced me to enroll at UW despite all odds. Together these experiences and the emotions they generated served me as a powerful epistemological resource in the sense that feminist scholars have suggested. They remind us that feeling and emotions function as forms of knowing, and articulate most powerfully how body, suffering and knowledge can work together as emancipatory knowledge (Jaggar, 1989; qtd. in De Lissovoy, in press).

These lessons I learned from my family's stories of struggle and survival became part of an emergent "structure of feelings" I believe in the sense that Williams (1977) describes and that resonates with Moll's notion of "funds of knowledge". Together, these sets of knowledge's, one affective and the other cognitive, and grounded in Mexicana/o cultural practice have the potential to coalesce into more critical and institutionalized formations if nurtured critically and collectively. This is precisely what Williams contends, that "structures of feelings" are cultural formations not yet fully formed, rather as "affective elements of consciousness and relationships" that are precursors to more concrete social experiences and institutionalized practices that can strengthen critical awareness through collective analysis and material practice (p. 133-34).

While my grandmother's stories began to initiate in me an incipient critical consciousness, it was my college experiences at the University of Wisconsin at Madison that made that transformation to radical activist perspective a reality. This more politicized identity formation began in multiple spaces, in cultural and political organizations like La Raza Unida and MEChA student organizations, in Chicano and Marxist studies classes and in the my participation in social and political movements in the 1970s and 1980s in Madison. It was through these formal and informal educational experiences where I began my identity shift from Mexican American to Chicana/o activist, similar to those documented by Urrieta (2009) in his study of Chicana/o activist intellectuals in California.

Urrieta's study also documents how certain key figures play a key role in enabling these transformative experiences. Sfard and Prusak (2005), for example, refer to them as significant narrators, that is individuals who are the main purveyors of critical discourses and practices in these cultural spaces or figured worlds. One particular professor stood

out at UW Madison in the 1970s. Dr. Prospero Saiz had just been hired as professor in the Comparative Literature Department at UW. Dr. Saiz, who had recently graduated from the University of Iowa, had been raised in Yaqui Mexicano communities in Arizona. As a new, young, radical Chicano professor in a predominantly white institution and Midwestern city, Saiz struck an imposing presence in the classroom not only because of his intellect but his physical presence; tall stature, large broad shoulders, dark complexion and longish hair. Of all the people I met during my first years during those years in college, the one person I was most inspired by was Professor Saiz. He would go on to mentor many of the young Chicana/o students who had arrived in Big Ten universities drawn by aggressive college recruitment policies and attractive financial support in the 1970s before all that changed in the 1980s when Ronald Reagan was elected president.

Dr. Saiz was one of the first Chicano/a faculty to arrive at UW in the mid 1970s along with this first cohort of Chicana/o college students from Texas and the Midwest. Dr. Saiz, who would later lead the Comparative Literature department as department chair in the 1980s, mentored many Mexicana/o and Chicano/a students over the years, many who were first generation college students from the Midwest and from Texas. Dr. Saiz made an immediate impact on the culture of the university by instituting the first Chicana/o studies classes offered at UW Madison. For most Chicana/o undergraduates, it was the first time that many of us had read Chicano and Mexican literature and history; Tomas Rivera, Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz, Rodolfo Acuna and others. I was also introduced to many Chicano movement poets and was especially moved by the work of Raul Salinas, a pinto poet and prison movement activist from Austin, Texas who had been incarcerated in federal prisons at Marion and Leavenworth for his activist work. In

these classes, we read mimeographed copies of Salinas' poetry, his classic *Un trip through the Mind Jail* that would later be published in chapbook form in 1980.

This powerful narrative poem that described schools and neighborhoods in his working class East Austin neighborhood resonated powerfully for us young Chicana/o students, most who came from similar neighborhoods and barrios. Salinas' graphic description of 1940s and 1950s barrios in which he grew up: "Neighborhood of endless hills, muddied streets--all chuckholed lined--that never dank of asphalt," were very similar to our west and south side neighborhoods in San Antonio where I was raised and the South Texas valley and Midwest barrios where most others in this Chicana/o cultural studies class. With the introduction of this and other new Chicana/o studies course at UW Madison, and the formation of Chicana/o student organizations on campus, the Chicano/a movement had arrived in this small Midwestern town. Salinas' poem, like so many other Chicana/o literary and cultural works at the time, was circulated around the country by Chicano/a faculty who were being recruited into newly created Chicano and Mexican American studies programs and departments that had begun to emerge as a result of *el movimiento*. This loosely defined network of cultural and political activists defined the Chicana/o movement at the time and while it ebbed during the 1980s under Reaganomics it never died as some scholars have argued but was maintained by micro cohorts of activist like ours in Madison.

Back then, copies of literary and historical works written by Chicana/o writers were usually circulated *rasquache*-style by copying and mimeographing blue inked copies of works like Salinas *Un Trip* recently written but unpublished by traditional presses. It is important to recall that Salinas' poem had first been published in the prison newspaper *Aztlan* where he has also been appointed its lead writer and editor. Salinas

was also instrumental in leading first classes at Leavenworth prison and from these experiences as educator and activist later utilize them in community and youth activist work first in Seattle and later Austin where he returned in 1981. In addition leading Chicana/o classes, Dr. Saiz and then graduate student Jesus Salas, who was also an important mentor, facilitated linkages with local university and community struggles that also fostered our political development during the 1970s.

The critical readings, poetry and the literature that formed the basis of our Chicano/a studies curriculum inspired our political and cultural work with UW student organizational work, first with La Raza Unida, the first Chicana/o student organization at UW Madison that evolved into MEChA in the late 1970s, in order to link to a developing and emergent national network of Chicana/o student organizations. Although the transformation from LRU to MEChA was partly inspired by the need to link to this cultural and political network, the name change did not come without struggle. Some students, including myself, expressed concern that our ties to community would be compromised. However, the importance of connecting to this nascent national student movement overrode these concerns.

Along with the African American and Native American Studies programs, these grass roots projects were the first attempts by students at UW Madison to bridge our academic work with community activism by students of color. This work represented both the discursive and nondiscursive practices that would create an oppositional race, ethnic and class consciousness and resistive political subjectivity that drew from both nationalist and internationalist critical discourses. While it is generally true that Chicana/o movement politics took on a decidedly cultural nationalist ideology (Quinones, 1990; Munoz, 1989; Garcia, 1997; Montejano, 2010), an internationalist perspective tied

to anti colonial movements around the world certainly impacted the formation of these emergent Chicano/a communities and part of the "militant ethos" that made up Chicano movement ideology according to Ignacio Garcia and other scholars (Gomez, 2006, Sampaio 2002; Rodriguez, 2011).

That semester and those subsequent years became a significant turning point in my life partly as a result of readings and discussions in these radical literature and history classes especially, that complemented the education that I was about to receive outside the classroom. It was at UW where I cut my political teeth so to speak as I soon became involved with other leftist and anarchist groups, the latter a part of Madison and Wisconsin's historically progressive tradition of worker and independent farmer politics.

I participated in numerous sit ins at the African American and Native American cultural centers to protest their closures by the UW administration; demonstrated and picketed outside the university president's office advocating for a Chicano studies department; wa maced by UW police while marching in support of South Africa divesture; and organized and participated in a 5-7000 person march in support of the Sandinistas, just to name a few of the most significant struggles during my undergraduate days at UW. These more material practices of activism solidified the conceptual forms of cultural and political practice that circulated in the classrooms and in LRU and MEChA offices where we shared new radical theories and discourses.

In the classroom, my education focused on courses in the newly emerging field of Chicano/a history, literature and culture. I began taking classes in various disciplines searching for courses that had anything to do with political or cultural resistance: Marxist, feminist-oriented history courses and literature courses, education courses on critical pedagogy, etc. A number of professors stood out in particular--Harvey Goldberg in

European history, Steve Stern and Florencia Mallon in Latin American history and Dionisio Valdez in Chicano labor history. However, it was Professor Saiz who stood out as role model, a significant narrator, institutional agent and transformational mentor for many young emerging Chicana/os who arrived at UW Madison in the mid 1970s. He successfully linked his academic and community work in local and international struggles and represented the kind of scholar activist work that I aspired to throughout my academic career.

During the 1980s, I left school to focus on community work and continued my political activism. Throughout the 1980s, that work fed my soul and my new family but I longed to return to graduate school. In 1990s, we relocated to Austin, finally returning to my birth state after a 15-year hiatus in Madison, regretfully leaving many close friends and allies and a large network of *companero/as* and *compadres* who shared many fine experiences with me during the good days and who also nurtured me during bad times, most notably when I lost my brother in 1988 while he was incarcerated.

This particular event, while certainly a traumatic experience for me, my family and close friends, was also significant in terms of my political development for it pointed out how the personal and political were thoroughly enmeshed in close knit community or activists and friends. The response to my brother's death by friends and activist community in Madison was inspiring and helped me and family negotiate this troubling time as they provided emotional and political support. I drew on the community networks that I had developed during my work at *La Raza Unida* student organization and later with MEChA, *el Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan*. While these networks had provided academic and cultural support during my undergraduate days at UW I now drew on them to help me through these difficult three years when I was involved in legal

proceedings to address what we say as failures of the criminal justice system. This networks were key to surviving and negotiating the legal system and dealing with the political ramifications of my brother's death. Those three years were instrumental to my political development as activist throwing into sharp relief the racist and class nature of the criminal justice system in real, concrete and personal terms.

In the mid 1990s, I finally returned to graduate school in English and cultural studies at UT Austin still intent on realizing this dream of merging both my work in political activism and the academy perhaps in a community college setting where I could continue to teach working class students. After Masters studies work, and a year or so into a PhD, I left to teach at Austin Community College and St. Edward's University, still planning to return to get that doctorate degree. About eight years flew by before I returned three years ago, this time to a program that seem to epitomize in theory and practice the kind of political and pedagogical ideals that I had been searching for in a discipline and that could help me focus my research interests and personal story of that experience.

Because of my age as an older returning student, I face particular challenges that more traditional students do not share. As an older student, I have a family and personal commitments that most young students do not share. My family and I have made personal and financial sacrifices that have allowed me to return to school to pursue that dream of achieving the pinnacle of education, a PhD. Let me be clear however that it is not only a personal goal but a goal I undertake for the sake of my community and memory of my grandmother who was a fierce advocate for education in our family. As scholar activist, I believe that one's intellectual work and educational practices must also be guided by the demand of the community, for social change and justice. As many

academics and community activists before me have documented, our public schools that serve our communities are failing our students who are pushed out of school in alarming numbers.

I currently do volunteer work as an archivist and Save Our Youth (SOY) workshop facilitator for Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia Bookstore and fieldsite for my study. I also worked as archivist for RSA/Resistencia and for filmmaker Laura Varela who is completing a documentary film of the life of Salinas. Since his passing in 2008, I have begun working on his second set of archives along with other members of the Resistencia *familia*. I was privileged to also work on his first set of archives in 1995, now housed at Stanford University.

In addition my work at RSA/Resistencia, I also work as project facilitator with the Institute for Community, University and School Partnership (ICUSP) at UT Austin where we work to bridge university resources with the Mexicana/o, Black and Asian working class communities and schools of East Austin. Through applied research and practice, we provide youth with the dispositions, skills and abilities to successfully negotiate themultiple figured worlds of schools, community and family. Community and family upgrade an academic pipeline that in the past has failed this community but will now facilitate minority student access at UT.

These experiences have underscored an important lesson for me about university and community partnerships. First and foremost, that community side of the partnership equation must define and dictate desired needs and outcomes from the inception of the partnership and that this relationship needs continuous renewal to ensure that community is always empowered and there results the production of real political capital. I am now

completing my dissertation research, focusing on these three projects that are attempting to put into practice these same ideals, lby inking critical theory and praxis.

My personal involvement in each project also motivates me and represents for me the continuation of the Chicana/o movement struggles that I participated in the 1970s and 1980s with some differences of course that I will explore in my study. What they all have in common however in the role that stories play in their work. I hope to document how the power of their local stories, personal and collective, have inspired the participants in these sites to create a new emergent political culture that is beginning to transform respective communities.

I narrated my journey because it serves as a personal context that directly informs and underscores the key themes of this study, namely the intersection of ideology, power and knowledge. Our cultural identities are rooted in our racial and ethnic experiences and the marginalization that comes from our second class status as a result. But there is a rich cultural tradition, strongly resistive to this marginalization that also defines our identity and leads to personal and political transformation.

I also firmly believe that one's academic work and scholarship is directly informed by these unique racial and ethnic experiences of the Mexicana/o community. As such, this standpoint will help me examine our social and educational experiences as a socio economic and culturally marginalized community. This next section, that I turn to now, provides an overview of my study that explores the nature of Chicana/o activist practice in three educational that have successfully bridged activist and educational work to transform and empower their communities.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY

Introduction

Using a narrative inquiry approach that utilizes principally the oral narratives of fifteen participants, site document analysis, and ethnographic work, this study proposes an examination of three educational spaces in Texas. I traced the life history trajectories of participants in three sites: members of an graduate student organization, the Advanced Studies in Chicano Research (ASCR); the Llano Grande Center, (LGC) a research center led by high school students; and Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia Bookstore (RSA), a Latina/o/Mexicana/o and progressive-oriented community space that host cultural arts activities, houses an independent book publishing operation and conducts poetry and community leadership workshops for youth in schools and detention centers. I document these Chicana/o and Mexicana/o educator stories and *testimonios* via a case study approach that captures how they utilize transformative educational theories and practices based on critical, translocal epistemological standpoints to empower the Mexicana/o and Chicano/a communities they serve.

This study illuminates the way these Chicana/os educators have struggled and succeeded in creating alternative and transformative spaces of teaching and learning founded on localized, place-based epistemologies, ontologies and ethics. I contextualize their work in multiple ways, by tracing the social and historical origins of their communities from the mid nineteenth century to the present. This historical narrative takes into account the conflictual nature of that story marked by cultural and class struggle. Because this study is educational in nature, I look especially at this struggle over educational rights and access focusing on the Chicana/o movement and its impact on the work of these educators, which I argue is significant. As such, I contend these sites may

be read as generational expressions of the movement having emerged at critical junctures of that struggle. For this analysis, I use Whittier's (1995) work on the feminist movement that describes that particular struggle in terms of different generational "micro-cohorts" and recent work on new social movement theory (Della Porta and Diani 2004, Castells, 2003).

In addition to this diachronic analysis, I also examined synchronically how these sites might be read as "experimental spaces" (Seed, qtd. in Beverley, 2004) that evoke the kind of *hybrid* (Bhabha, 2004), *borderlands* (Anzaldua, 1987), *anomalous spaces* (Ellsworth, 1999), *third spaces of enunciation* (Mignolo, 2000) that use local and autochthonous forms of transformative pedagogy to create activist and alternative identities. These individual and collective identity practices, which I call aspects of the "Tejano/Chicano activist educated person" (Levinson, Foley and Holland, 1996) are models that all consultants aspire to enact and perform in their daily work. As I discuss later in my findings, these educators model a form of organic intellectualism that strives for an even more emancipatory practice that bridges formal academic and informal community contexts. I document how this merging of seemingly incommensurable spaces and worlds produce new emergent, hybrid pedagogies, epistemologies and identity practices: LGC consultants merge the work of a local high school, Edcouch-Elsa High School with local, community-based educational and social change project; RSA/Resistencia Bookstore consultants provide a space where graduate and undergraduate students work with local community activists and artists to produce cultural arts for change; and ASCR consultants create alternative, autonomous spaces to negotiate scholar activist work that produces spaces of real community engagement. This

document through their stories how consultants have successfully and authentically bridged these historically disparate worlds.

An important focus of this study addresses the production of individual and collective identity formation as a means to negotiate these spaces. To that end, I consider the construct of "educated person" used by Levinson and Holland (1996) in their study of subjectivity and identity formation. Their work is significant for my study because it focuses on how particular cultural discourses and material practice function to mediate identity practices. In my study, I sought to identify those salient discursive and material practices that created a Chicana/o educated person, that is to say a culturally specific and politicized subject much different than the type of educated person that traditional schooling systems produce. By focusing on critical pedagogical and political work in these spaces, I can more fully "elaborate the cultural practices by which particular sets of skills, knowledges and discourses" define an educated person in these educational contexts as distinct from formal learning (ibid, 1996). This view of education as a form of cultural training will help me illuminate the distinctly local, culturally-based practices that make up these spaces. While I traced key, recurring themes across all three sites, I found some differences that became evident, especially with consultants who worked in multiple spaces. This finding suggests a multiplicity of practices that exist within even these spaces of Chicana/o activism linked as they are by common ideological practice. It underscores the vibrancy of Chicana/o studies whose scholars are engaged in projects and debates that are impacting larger disciplinary debates in radical ways. Moreover, by putting these sites in dialogue with each other around common epistemological, pedagogic, ethical and political concerns, I add another level of contextualization to this study.

Context of Topic

Latinos are the largest and fastest-growing minority group in the U.S., rising from 12% of the population in 2000 to 17% of the total U.S. population in 2009 and is projected to grow to 38% of the population by 2050 (National Center for Education Statistics). However, today's school-age population of Latinos already reach these numbers and represent the second largest group of students after whites. Coupled with these statistics are the alarming dropout rates for Latinos in comparison to whites, over 40% nationally is triple the rate for whites. In some inner city schools, the Latino dropout rates are higher (latinobusinessreview.blogspot.com, retrieved 7/18/09).

Research points to structural reasons for their lack of success citing lack of educational resources and limited access to rigorous academic courses. Latinos frequently attend the poorest school districts and are generally relegated to remedial and special needs courses. "From early childhood to through higher education, Latinos continue to be underserved by educational programs designed to help the most disadvantaged students (NCLR 2007, brief #8). As some critics have argued, these dismal numbers reflect a failure due to our national education policies and practices rooted in larger socioeconomic forces and ideological practices. So clearly these statistics underscore how US education systems have failed our youth due to larger structural reasons, like failed national policies (TAKS, accountability) and lack of adequate funding on the one hand, to formal mainstream schooling practices in schools (deficit discourses, tracking, special need).

As we begin the second decade of the new millenium, the state of education for most Latino communites is grim. Latino male youth in particular continue to be

marginalized in public schools leading to academic failure and ushered along the school-to-prison-pipeline that tracks "African American and Latino youth from schools to jails and prisons through suspensions, expulsions, miseducation, and "diploma denial" (Fine & Ruglis qtd. in Winn and Behizadeh, 2011). Latino males continue to lead in dropout rates along with their Black brethren a cyclical pattern that continues to relegate them to the lowest socio economic rungs of society. This distinctive form of poverty has been attributed to the cultural and economic process defined by some (Harvey, 1997; Limon, 1994) as postmodernity that becomes the central lived experience of lower working class Mexicana/o communities as a result of their subaltern positioning and attendant failure of the public education system (Limon, 1994).

These social realities underscore the need to examine structural reasons behind the failure of our educational system as well as the educational contexts that are successfully addressing these problems. To that end, this study addresses some of the structural constraints that lead to poor school performance as documented in research studies and by the consultants that I interviewed. Their analysis of these structural factors that contribute to educational failure of our communities figures prominently in my findings. My focus, however, illustrates how consultants in these spaces are addressing these issues. Hence my narrative addresses the pedagogical and political work of these Chicana/o activists. While recent research has begun to document how Chicana/o and Mexicana/o educators are transforming spaces using critical pedagogies and curriculums, my study expands this work in new directions by examining informal learning spaces outside traditional sites where education occurs. This new research explores how non-traditional, alternative spaces are challenging traditional and contemporary critical models and pushing them into more emancipatory directions.

This new research suggests developing more deeply culturally-responsive curriculum and pedagogical practices that attend to student's prior experiences and differing backgrounds (Grant and Sleeter, 2003; Ladson Billings, 1995, 2001; Nieto, 2004). This work also stress the importance of curriculum and "disruptive spaces" (Weiss and Fine, 2001, p. 521) that allow students to challenge oppressive practices and engage in civic action for social justice (Grant and Sleeter, 2003; hooks, 1996; Nieto, 2004). In this view, these forms of culturally relevant curriculum that involves students in social critique and reconstruction are important for transforming their educational experiences (Ashcraft, 2008).

Theory/Analytic Frame

This is a qualitative study of three educational contexts and their participants that self-define as Chicana/o. I utilized intersecting approaches that inform my study drawn primarily from critical and culturally relevant pedagogies, Chicana feminist standpoint and social movement theory. My research methodology and methods includes a case study approach, ethnography and participant observation, and critical narrative analysis to explore the contributions of three Chicana/o educational contexts to social justice education.

This comparative study provides for a more broadened interpretative perspective that is "local and ethnographic, yet moves beyond the school to examine links between local and cultural practices and the community, the region, the state and the economy" (p. 2) in order to examine the various ways that these sites engage in political and cultural struggles over place and space, identity practices and ways of knowing and being that articulate racial and gender meanings and power in educational contexts..

Research Design

My research design will be a collective case study that relies on interviewing, observation and narrative analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2002) in conjunction with methods grounded in Chicana feminist (Anzaldúa, 1987; Villenas, 1996; Sandoval, 1999) and indigenous (Smith, 1999, Urrieta, 2009) frameworks. Three sites and the oral narratives of fifteen educators formed the basis of this study. Data collection consisted of fifteen individual interviews, site document analysis and observant participation (Vargas, 2008).

I also conducted analysis of site documents that includes theoretical essays produced by these sites, email correspondences between researcher and participants, websites, filmic narratives produced by participants. These methods include fieldnotes, individual and group interviews, case studies, participant observations, journal writing, email correspondence, and document, websites, and artifact narrative analysis. My data collection and secondary literature formed the basis of this study's narrative that authentically weave their multiple stories.

My study explores these sites to understand the relationships between epistemological, pedagogical and identity practices and how they may be read as expressions of Chicana/o activism. To this end, case study, ethnographic interview and observational data helped me to highlight the complexities of identity formation and agency throughout this process. Using multiple theoretical lenses of social movement theory and critical theory, with tenets of Chicana feminist standpoint and identity-as-practice social cultural theories I discuss how Chicana activist agency is negotiated and enacted in these spaces through their political and pedagogical work.

Research Questions

The current educational climate I described above demands that marginalized groups be studied in order to improve access and equity in education. This study contributes to the scholarship that is now beginning to use multiple lens to study educational that seek social and educational change. Using principally the life histories of Chicana/o activist participants, I identified the relationships between activist identities, new social movements and alternative educational spaces, focusing on the work of Red Salmon Arts (RSA), the Llano Grande Center (LGC) and the Advanced Seminar on Chicana/o Research (ASCR). I explored these relationships in terms of the following research questions:

1) What is the meaning of "organic intellectual" in the context of the contemporary Chicana/o movement, as represented in educational spaces?

2) What do participants' personal stories tell us about the evolution and transformation of the Chicano/a movement?

3) What do participant's theories and practices of pedagogy reveal about the nature of their social engagement and the formation of their activist identities?

Significance of Study

> Further studies on activism and local contentious practice should focus on specific contexts as sites of change and transformation with a broader understanding and interpretation of activism. Universities, K–12 schools, and other spaces of Chicana and Chicano activist educator transformation can be studied using the concept of micro figured worlds. I propose as well ethnographic methods that focus on the micro figured world as the target of local study beyond the strict fixation on a physical site, or place. Micro figured worlds can be place bound, but can also exist beyond a specific location and encompass, like the borderlands in borderlands

> theory, a spiritual as well as an emotional space. The data drawn and interpreted from these micro figured worlds can further inform the struggle to change *whitestream* schools (Urrieta 2009, pp. 165-66).

Research has shown how critical pedagogies, curriculums such as cultural relevant teaching and learning contributes to the success of marginalized student performances. However, little work has focused on the intersection of identity and agentic and social movement theory to improve student success. Building on the work of Chicana feminist standpoint theorists (Delgado-Bernal, 1998; Bejarano, 2005; Hurtado, 1998; Delgado, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2004; Solorzano and Yasso, 2002), I examine how educational practices that incorporate folk and community forms of knowledge and epistemologies can create alternative and transformative spaces where authentic and emancipatory forms of education can occur. The incorporation of narratives and stories add to growing research and literature that studies the intersection of race, ethnicity, queer, and gender discourses and practices with education and social activist movements.

The purpose of this study also illustrates and yields new understandings of the experiences of students of color in alternative teaching and learning spaces. As the numbers of Chicana/o and Latino students increase, educators need to be poised to address these growing numbers especially if almost half are dropping out and many end up in criminal justice system. The school-to-prison pipeline needs to be redirected to colleges in order to ensure the welfare of our communities (http/:www.aclu.org:racial-justice:school-prison-pipeline). This study of alternative and activist spaces that are enacting transformative educational practices is also especially relevant because of the need to document stories of success (Villenas and Foley, 2002) especially via the new qualitative criterion (Valenzuela, 1999) and via multiple lens approaches (Russel-

Rodriguez, 2007). And in this postmodern moment, researchers need new more innovative approaches that employ intersecting critical theories and methods (Sandoval, 1999; Harvey, 1990, Jameson, 1991; Castells, 2003; Mignolo 2000; Urrieta, 2009) to provide more complex and nuanced studies of social phenomenon in our postmodern age. Another reason to undertake this study is to focus on Texas specific educational contexts and practices. While new research has begun to explore how educators employ transformative pedagogy in Chicana/o educational contexts, most of these studies have been focused in California (Urrieta, 2004). Until recently, Latino based studies of this type have not focused on the work of Texas educators who are creating transformative educational spaces using localized, place based approaches to teaching and learning.

My study also has direct implications for the ways that educators are incorporating Chicana/o community based discourses, practices, policies and curricula to create activist identities and agencies that counter more traditional schooling systems (Apple, 2003; Freire, 1971; Gramsci, 1971). I documented how these spaces are transforming formal and informal teaching and learning spaces where participants negotiate identities to produce more agentic subjectivities in radical ways. As such, these sites represent race and ethnic-based distinct micro cultures that are producing critical and empowered subjectivities and identities (Levinson and Holland, 1996) and yielding power for participants (M. and F. Guajardo, 2008). Specifically, I examine how participants in these spaces utilize their Chicana/o activist identity practices that build on local, place based autochthonous teaching and learning and Chicana/o movement theories and practices as a tool of agency in general and within education.

CONCLUSION

In the chapters that follow, I present my literature review, methodology, findings and analysis of my consultants in three educational spaces: the Advanced Seminar in Chicano/a Research (ASCR), the Llano Grande Center (LGC) and Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia (RSA) Bookstore. This study examined the oral narratives, site documents and field reflections of these consultants and spaces that constituted the basis of my data collection. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature that I first situate within a social and historical narrative that traces the history of Mexicana/o and Chicana/o communities in south and central Texas. I then trace the key literatures that made up my preliminary epistemological scaffold and conceptual framework. Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach and methods I employed in my study. Chapter 4 presents the findings and preliminary descriptive analysis, followed by Chapter 5 that extends and refines these findings and analysis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

> As a radical standpoint, perspective, position, 'the politics of location' necessarily calls those of us who would participate in the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practice to identify the spaces where we begin the process of re-vision. (hooks, 1991; p. 145)

> Public education, in this reading, becomes a site of ongoing struggle to preserve and extend the conditions in which autonomy of judgment and freedom of action are informed by the democratic imperatives of equality, liberty, and justice. (Giroux and Giroux, 2008).

INTRODUCTION

Chapter overview

I begin with a brief historical overview of Anglo and Mexicano relations beginning in the early 19th century when Anglo settlement of South Texas began in Texas. After a general history of these relations, I turn to education field to examine how that social conflict was expressed via schooling discourses and practices and to social and cultural formations of Mexicano resistance to these hegemonic or *whitestream* theories and practices. I use the term *whitestream* to highlight the racial nature of these discourses. I explore intersections between various dominating practices as Apple (2006) and others (Gramsci, 1971; Crehan, 2002) suggest. Crehan (2002) highlights the importance of studying social phenomenon in relation to other larger political, economic and social contexts in which they are embedded (p. 4).

This approach to studying educational contexts borrows from the traditions of cultural studies and critical ethnographic approaches in which this study is situated. One important context that recent Chicano scholars have articulated in the last three decades has been the colonial encounters that have marked Anglo and Mexicano relations since the early 19th century (Acuna, 1973; Callahan, 2003; Montejano, 1987; De Leon, 1983; Zamora, 2003). The historical section that begins this chapter draws heavily from the work of these scholars. After examining these larger relations of power that characterized Anglo Mexican relations, I turn to local contexts of the ASCR, RSA and the LGC to examine how the realities of power are experienced and named by participants of these sites and their responses, always cognizant of larger forces that impact their activist practices.

SOCIAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The power of recalling this history is also an especially important social practice that informs the present, as Flores (2002) reminds us. In addition to the Alamo myth, Chicana/o scholarship has uncovered many of the dominant mythologies surrounding other significant events and key moments that have defined Texas history as it has been "officially" documented in our textbooks and canonic literatures. Namely, myths surrounding Texas Independence, The US Mexican American war, The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the "Border Troubles" all figure prominently in my historical narrative that contextualizes my study.

This dominant historiography has come under critique especially since *el movimiento*, that is the Chicano civil rights movement and cultural renaissance of the late 1960s and early 1970s. While official historical narratives stress order and stability, critical and Chicana/o historiography stresses conflict and contradiction (Acuna, 2000; Limon, 1992; Montejano, 1987; Callahan, 2003; Gomez, 2008). Of course, in response to this subordination Mexicanos resisted both materially and via a symbolic war as well. Part of this symbolic war included most prominently the *corridos*, those Mexicano folks songs that emerged in the late nineteenth and early 20th century that functioned as early forms of resistive expressive culture by documenting and symbolically resisting Anglo hegemony (Paredes, 1958; Limon, 1992).

I also examine institutional contexts by looking at the school context that each of these micro cohorts respond to: the LGC has struggled against local social political and cultural conditions that have relegated Mexicana/o community to second class citizenry relative to Valley Anglo power structure; the RSA has battled first segregation of its community then gentrification in east Austin barrios; the ASCR grew out of failure of UT Austin to seriously address the needs of Chicano grad students who sought new forms of scholarship that addressed community concerns, both local, regional and international. I argue that these local contexts are directly linked to a history of cultural and racial conflict that has defined Texas history and whose legacy still lives in myriad forms that I capture in this study. This conflict runs the gamut from outright war and insurrection to battles in the courts, political, cultural and educational arenas.

I employ a multitude of critical Chicana/o and postcolonial socio historical perspectives that depart from the internal colonial model (Gutierrez, 2001; Barrera, 1997; qtd in Urrieta, p. 44). This representation of Texas history is situated in revisionist forms

of historiography like New Borderlands, Chicano/a, postcolonial, subaltern and New Historicism (Paredes, 1988, 1993; Castañeda, 1992; Acuna 1972; Montejano, 1987; Barrera, 1979; De León, 1983, 1982; Alonzo, 1998; Anzaldua, 1989; Tijerina 1994; Zamora 1993; Griswold del Castillo, 1990; Horsman, 1981; Limon, 1992, 1994; Limerick 1992; Mirande, 1987; Rosenbaum, 1981; Almaguer, 1989; Gutierrez, 1989; Young, 1997; Sandos, 1992; Guha, 1984 ; Callahan, 2003). This model first articulated by Acuna (1972), Barrera (1979) and others has come under criticism by new scholarship in the past decades. One critique argues that this theory fails to recognize the development of a Chicano working class integrated into US working class (Garcia, 1991). Instead the history that follows views Mexicana/o and Chicano history as more a postcolonial project of multiple threads and amalgam of various cultures. Most recently, the work of Manolo Callahan (2003) employs a decolonizing lens to examine this history. I use his work as well as the work of Montejano (1987) who first broached Texas's Anglo and Mexicano political and cultural relations from a critical Chicano historical lens.

This narrative that follows is the unofficial version of Texas history that you don't get in textbooks. This story of Texas is based on "unofficial history" as contrasted with "official history" that one tends to find in high school textbooks and part of traditional history instruction (Wertsch, 1998). This "unofficial" history focuses on literature and historiography of Chicano/a descent and dissent (Smith, 1999) that underscores the contentious social relations marked by race, class and gendered differences, and violence--material and discursive that characterizes this Texas history. This critical historiography challenges the more conventional accounts of US modernity in the late 19th and early 20th century and also informs my account here of Texas history as well.

Critical, postcolonial and subaltern historiography underscores the importance of revisionist historical narratives to recover elided indigenous and subaltern cultures and epistemologies. That is, it subverts myth of exceptionalism, dominant and hegemonic historical representations, education and schooling practices, epistemologies, and forms of accommodation and resistance. Callahan (2003) for example merges Chican@, new historicist and postcolonial scholarship, to read US and Texas history in novel ways that involve a discursive critique along with representation of material violence that characterizes this period. Here, he underscores the discursive war as part of the "representational machine" as he calls it that elides US history:

> Scholars who have interrogated the dominant theme of "American exceptionalism" have been critical of America's violent past by linking it to a history of imperialism in the West. Reginald Horsman, for example, challenges the celebratory interpretations of violence by examining the contradictions that manifest destiny produced. Richard Drinnon and Richard Slotkin have more explicitly linked American expansion to a legacy of race hatred. Drinnon posits US westward expansion as a complicated expression of an ideology of hatred connecting racism and progress. For Drinnon the American expansionist ethos associated with westward movement reveals a dual interdependent project: nation building and native hating. Slotkin's regeneration through violence thesis reveals the "historical development" and "mythic representation" of American violence through the trope of "savage war" and its stages: regression, redemption, and regeneration. "The premise of 'savage war,'" Slotkin explains, "is that ineluctable political and social differences –rooted in some combination of 'blood'and culture –make coexistence between primitive natives and civilized Europeans impossible on any basis other that of subjugation. (Callahan 2003, unpublished dissertation)

More recently, Lears' (2009) cultural history of the US, *Rebirth of a Nation* continues this revisionist historiography in his study of the rise of US modernity. He demonstrates how the rise of industrial capitalism, US expansionism and Jim Crow racism are interrelated social phenomenon that form the material and ideological foundation upon which this country is founded on. Lears (2009) suggest that the same

cultural logic that justified Jim Crow practices in the American South and Native American genocide are intimately tied to US colonial and imperial expansionism of the late 19th century (Lears 2009). One only need to point to the displacement and dispossession of Mexican lands in the Southwest that my narrative recounts as examples of some of the racist practices justified by the same cultural logic that Lears (2009) has identified.

Critical and postcolonial critique also provides a powerful analytic tool for understanding the processes of subjectification. That is to say, how subjects are constructed or formed through technologies or practices of power/knowledge (Foucault 1977). In addition to naming theses discursive processes of subjection and subordination, Bhabha (1985) for example uses the notion of hybridity to examine subjects and contexts that have colonized via histories and representations and reverse the effects of dominant discourses, racist and gendered for example in order to translate previously hidden indigenous cultures and their knowledges (p. 156, "Signs taken for wonders"). Anzaldua's (1987) concept of the borderlands for example captures this subaltern history of multiplicity that defines Chicano history and social and cultural production, both as structural critique and as resistive possibilities.

THE STORY OF TEXAS (UNOFFICIAL VERSION)

This story begins roughly in the early 19th century and is marked by a number of key events that illustrate how social conflict has been a major feature of Anglo and Mexicanos in Texas, namely the Texas independence, the Mexican American Wars and a series of border insurrections. Callahan (2003) argues that Texas history since Independence can be characterized as one expression of the US settler colonial project.

Settler colonialism names the process of American expansionism into Native American and Mexican lands in the mid 19th century. This US settler colonial project relied on various form of material violence and ideological violence to subjugate mexicanos. In addition to military operations, Texas Rangers, the US colonial project relied on a "representational machine" that produced a set of discourses to justify suppression (Callahan, 2003). This "prose of counterinsurgency" functioned as a form of colonial knowledge that enabled Anglo hegemony via selective representation of history and identities much (p. 9) much like the Orientalism functioned for the British empire (Said, 1973).

These two events, Texas Independence and annexation, were precursors to the legacy of unequal socio economic, political and cultural relations that have defined this history between Anglos and Mexicans in Texas. It also explains much of Anglo hostility towards Mexicanos and how they were codified into public discourse. Paredes (1958) for example characterized Anglo and Mexican relations in Texas since the end of the Mexican American war as a "conflict of cultures". With the codification of American hegemony via the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexicanos who were now part of Texas, were subjected to racism, religious prejudices and linguistic xenophobia (Limon, 1992; p. 22; Acuna 1972; de Leon, 1983).

This view of Texas history as shot through with violence is founded on the work of scholars that have called to question the theme of American exceptionalism that divests US history of its more violent and imperial past, a history marked by African American slavery, Native American genocide, Asian labor exploitation and Mexicano displacement. These scholars have directly linked this violent history to US colonial and imperialist social and economic practices (Horsman, 1981; Slotkin, 1992; Drinnon,

1997). This transformation forms the backdrop to one of my sites, the Llano Grande Center where student researchers have documented this history via life histories and testimonios of the local Mexicano community. This collection of stories and testimonois of local histories provides a new subaltern perspective missing in traditional historiography.

Mexicanos resistance took many forms from local conventional political battles in the courtrooms and local political institutions to outright war. Chicano scholars (Limon, 1974; Zamora 1993) for example have documented the 1911 gathering of Mexicanos to protest treatment of labor exploitation, violation of women's rights, and school discrimination and segregation. On the other hand, there were insurrectionist movements as well. The most famous and documented insurrectionist movement of this period was the guerrilla war of Texas Mexicans led by Anicento Pizana in 1915-17 and the subsequent repression that followed orchestrated by the Texas Rangers, Texas and US government to manage Mexicano and Indio resistance (Paredes, 1958; de Leon, 1983; Acuna, 1972; Callahan, 2003). The Lower Rio Grande valley, that area bordered by the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers, became a virtual war zone for these two years according to many (Montejano, 117; Callahan, 2003, de Leon, 1983, Sandos, 1992).

This armed conflict was an organized response to the ongoing displacement and dispossession of Mexicano rancheros as reflected in the Plan de San Diego, a revolutionary manifesto that detailed the ideological justification for the uprising (Sandos 1992, Montejano, 1986). The plan called for the creation of an independent republic consisting of most of the southwestern states led by a liberating army that had numbered up to 400 by some estimates. Organized raids by dozens of Mexicanos led local Anglo authorities to respond swiftly led by Texas Rangers and other state militias to

repress the Mexicano insurgency. The Texas Rangers began a systematic and indiscriminate manhunt that resulted in lynchings and executions of Mexicanos, many who were not even involved in the raids. Although some historians have attempted to discredit reports that local conditions were not responsible and instead inspired by Mexican or German influences, the evidence points to Anglo racism and political and economic displacement of Mexicanos. They were many other examples of insurrections that reflected this period of racial tension and the militarist response in south and west Texas. Most notable were the insurrectionist movements led by Catarino Garza in South Texas and the Salt Wars of El Isidro led by Juan Cortina.

Segregation

After the Reconstruction period, racial segregation of Anglo and Mexican relations dominated the social and economic landscape of South Texas. The racialized character of these relations shifted to more sophisticated and insidious forms of exclusion reflecting the changing political reality. This period is marked by Jim Crow-like relations that structures the new emerging order in South Texas in part determined by shifting divisions with labor in farming relations and concomitantly in the residential separation that demarcated these labor and social divisions (Montejano, 1987; p. 167).

These new modern order of Anglo/Mexican relations in South Texas was similar to the discourses and practices of the "Jim Crow" south. The modern emergence of Jim Crow segregation in South Texas Montejano links directly to the rise of commercial agriculture, specifically the disciplining of Mexican farmworkers though a vast web of labor controls, and relatedly the impersonal and informal wage labor relationships that

dictated social relations and physical relations and finally the racial discourses that help maintain these structural relations between Anglo and Mexican.

While this segregation was manifest in various institutions, in education there emerged separate Mexican schools that were generally inferior in quality of instruction. Another direct reflection of this racial apartheid was the segregation of schools into white and Mexican. Segregation of schools along racial lines was part and parcel of overall strategy to build separate institutions in South Texas. Apple (2003) for example has underscored the role of schooling serves an ideological mission to produce a citizenry that conforms to the values, beliefs and norms of dominant groups.

Integration

The demise of segregation began after WWII for Mexicanos partly attributed to modernizing process of industrialization and urbanization. The demand for labor in factories as a result of WWII also facilitated archaic social and labor relations based on racist practices. Part of the response to labor shortage as a result of WWII was the Bracero Program that institutionalized labor importation from Mexico to meet the needs of commercial farming that now dominated in agricultural production. As mechanization increased in farming production, and the labor demand slowed as a result, prompted the end of the Bracero program in 1964 as well due to criticism the program in its treatment of immigrant workers. In the political arena, no Mexicano had held statewide office until the late 1960s, since Lorenzo De Zavala in the mid 19th century when Roy Barrera was appointed secretary of state. In San Antonio where I grew up, the Good Government

League (GGL) functioned as the dominant political machine of Anglo business interests (Gutierrez, 1998).

As this historical narrative has suggested, Anglo and Mexicano relations were characterized by both material and the discursive violence that legitimized Mexicano subaltern status since Texas Independence, Mexican American war and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. What follows these events between mid 19th century to the 1930s are insurrectionist wars and violence that characterized the region, then Jim Crow segregation that defines mid modern era. Not until the 1960s and 1970s do conditions change significantly for these communities, when young Chicana/o movement activists, building on precursor reformist struggles by Mexicanos and radicalized by civil rights and antiwar movements assume leadership of Mexicana/o comunity struggles. I now turn to the realm of education to describe how the socio economic and political relations were made manifest in education and schooling practices beginning with mid 19th century to *el movimiento* where more radical restructuring of racist educational practices were finally affected until the Reagan years of retrenchment in the 1980s.

SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION IN TEXAS

The process of racialization under the banner of Manifest Destiny finds its parallels in education and the racist schooling practices in Texas. Maintenance of that hegemony took many forms most clearly in labor relations and the political arena but schooling played a key institutional role in policing and disciplining Mexicanos (Apple, 2004). For example, San Miguel (1999) describes how Anglocentric history texts contain

little content about the Mexicano contributions to the making of the Southwest or Texas. In fact, they are disparaged and represented as either ignorant peones or bandidos. Educational historians have generally depicted Mexicano school experiences as lacking access and equality. In fact Chicano/a scholars maintain that schools have served as instruments for maintaining Anglo "social, economic, cultural and political hegemony …" (San Miguel 2003, p. 4). According to Urrieta (2009), "the focus of formal schooling shifted from one of basic academic training to that of socializing and Americanizing, which resulted in growing hostility toward the Spanish language and Mexican culture" (p. 17).

This history shows how soon after Texas Independence and the US Mexican War, Anglo and religious leaders established schools for Mexicano children "in order to assimilate or evangelize and convert the large numbers of groups identified as *foreigners*" (San Miguel, 2003; p. 4). In the late 19th century, public education changed to reflect new scientific theories that were gaining prominence. Teaching and learning became standardized based on scientific principles. By the late 19th century, Mexican children were denied access to white schools and by the 1920s, schools were segregated into American and Mexican schools throughout the southwest (G. González, 1990; Donato, 1997; Urrieta, 2009).

Rather than provided with a rigorous academic curriculum, Mexicano children were provided with a subtractive curriculum (Valenzuela, 1999) that was intellectually deficient and absent of their language, history and culture (San Miguel, 2003; p. 8). As a result, Mexicano children generally performed poorly in schools and a whole array of culture deficit theories emerged to account for their failure, rather than blame these structural reasons for student performance.

Resistance to Anglo schooling took other forms as recent scholarship has uncovered. For example, Tejanos began forming their own schools as early as the mid 19th century and continued into the early 20th century (Salinas, 2000; De Leon, 1992) as response to inferior schooling practices or no schooling at all. These "escuelitas" according to Salinas were formed in Texas in the late 19th and early 20th century in the border regions of South Texas in predominantly Mexicano communities. The formation of local schools to address Mexicano education became part of a network of alternative and autonomous institutions that addressed their concerns.

Beginning after WWII, Mexicano resistance to schooling practices described above became more systematic and coordinated. In Texas, Mexicanos began protesting these segregationist school policies by challenging them in the courts. Boycotts were organized against Anglo merchants by LULAC chapters in south Texas. Founded in 1929, LULAC, a civic organization of middle class Texas Mexicanos was formed in part to address the inequities in business, housing and in the schools. While LULAC helped ease racial discrimination in Texas, they supported controversial issues that alienated more progressive challenges to whitestream practices as pointed out by Montejano (1987). For example they supported repatriation of Mexicanos and opposed the pecan shellers strike in San Antonio led by *la pasionera*, Emma Tenayuca (p. 244).

As public institutions began dismantling the segregated social order, everyday race relations began to change as well. This transformation began to accelerate as the Chicano civil rights movement began to coalesce in the late 1950s and 1960s. This political and cultural movement known as *el movimiento* began to unleash and build a repertoire of stories that ideologically became "a vital part of creating a new popular culture and political consciousness" (Foley, 1994, p. 16). This creation of a new social,

expressive space had played a pivotal role in dismantling the social political and cultural marginalization that Mexicanos had been assigned them (p. 17). A more detailed history of that movement now follows.

El Movimiento

In the 1960s, resistance to these pervasive and systematic racist educational policies assumed a new level of struggle. Chicana/o challenges in the educational arena were an extension of *el movimiento*, localized Chicano social movements that focused on the themes of labor, land, education and political power. *El movimiento* was a response to the racial, class and gender oppression and subjugation, both material and symbolic of Mexicanos in the US (Munoz, 1989; Acuna, 1973; Urrieta, 2004). Although efforts were made to unify the movement nationally, it represented more an amalgam of the labor urban rights struggles of barrio neighborhoods; labor rights of farmworkers in Texas, California and the Midwest; struggles over usurpation and displacement of Mexican landowners in New Mexico; expression of third party politics in Texas; fights over civil rights in local political arenas and of course demands for better access to educational resources. Its ideological vision borrowed from black power and civil rights movements, anti-war movement, indigenous rights, and of anti colonial struggles around the world.

These regional differences that manifested themselves politically were based in part of differing local conditions. In Texas, Tejano responses to Anglo domination were more focused on an institutionalized politics of resistance vs the identity battles that characterized Californio politics. The Tejano experience was focused on the party politics of the La Raza Unida party led by Jose Angel Gutierrez. In California, movement leaders held spirited debates over issues of self-identity and representation. This is not to suggest

that identity politics did not play a role in Tejano resistance but not as dominant or prevalent as in perhaps California or Wisconsin where internal struggles over issues of self-identification took precedent (Urrieta, 2009; UW MEChA archives).

The movement to protest *whitestream* educational policies was first catalyzed by high school students and anti war struggles on university campuses across the country but especially in the southwest. The most significant expressions of *el movimiento* in education were the high school student walkouts or *blowouts* that occurred in Texas, California, Colorado, Arizona and Michigan. The most visible expression of these blowouts was in East LA where thousands of high school students across the state walked out of classrooms in protest (Munoz, 1989; Acuna 1988; Solorzano and Bernal, 2001). In Texas, at least thirty-nine walkouts had occurred by 1969 according to the student group MAYO a Chicano student organization at St. Mary's University in San Antonio (Gutierrez, 1998).

These student walkouts were generally protests over a myriad of issues but focused on student grievances over high dropout rates (50% in some schools), overcrowded and poor conditions of schools, racial tracking of students, *whitestream* dominant curriculum, racial discrimination by Anglo teachers and administrators, and lack of Chicano teachers and administrators. This led to the first youth conference organized in Denver that Chicano youth from all over the southwest led by the most visible community leaders of California, Texas, Colorado and New Mexico. Protests spilled over to university campuses where activists demanded greater access to higher education, Chicano studies programs and departments and greater Chicana/o representation in administrative and faculty positions. Chicano organizations emerged on campuses across the country demanding more university faculty and administrators, more

aggressive student recruitment and demanding the establishment of Chicano studies programs.

Although the Chicana/o student walkouts were over similar issues and shared the similar strategies and demands, they were not protests organized by a national organization. These were local manifestations of anger over systematic treatment by schools. That coalescence of interests would not come until 10 years later with the formation of MEChA in the mid 1970s. Although the majority of these Chicana/o walkouts occurred during the height of the Chicana/o movement in the late 1960s, I recall at my high school participating in a walkout as late as the early 1970s.

As a result of these protests, Chicana/os gained some ground in education as legislation was passed to improve public school conditions and in the universities where Chicana/o and Mexican American studies were created. Faculty numbers increased somewhat though not at numbers representing the general population. Chicano studies departments and programs began offering classes on history, literature and arts. Student enrollment increased across the campuses principally through affirmative action policies established in the 1960s to address historical underrepresentation. "Pipelines" were established that linked high schools and universities and/or community colleges and universities. One such pipeline for example between Palo Alto College and the University of Wisconsin Madison sent hundreds of students to this progressive Midwestern university.

Other university-based organizations representing faculty and administrators soon emerged, NACCS[1] and NACHE[2] and of course Chicana/o studies programs were

[1] National Association of Chicano and Chicana Studies
[2] National Association of Chicanos in Higher Education

founded at many universities and college that emerged organically from the Chicana/o social movement. This organic link to *el movimiento* makes Chicana/o studies programs unique from other disciplines and as scholar has argues "suggests a unique kind of pedagogical and methodological approach to how we research, write, and teach" (Valdez, 2007). Where I differ with Valdez is his claim that organic linkages to community are not central issue amongst Chicano/a students today. In fact, as one of the sites that I examine, the ASCR, was centrally concerned with developing concrete connections between their academic work and community issues as I will discuss in my study.

While Chicana/o movement scholarship has focused on student activism based in the southwest for the most part, new research has begun to uncover other regional expressions in the Midwest for example that has yet to be fully documented. Jesus Salas, who founded the farmworker advocacy organization and union, *Obreros Unidos* was a UW Madison student leader in the anti war movement protesting Vietnam involvement. He later would help found the Chicana/o Studies program at UW Madison with Professor Prospero Saiz and La Raza Unida (LRU) students. LRU was the first Chicano student group on campus and would later become a MEChA chapter in the late 1970s (ONDA/Tezlatipoca). In addition to organizing political and cultural activities targeting the growing Chicana/o community in Madison in the late 1970s and 1980s, MEChA would go on to become a force in local student and community politics. They were instrumental in organizing protests in support of university divestiture in South Africa and for Palestinian statehood, and organizing one of the largest marches in support of the Sandinista revolution in the early 1980s (ONDA/Tezlatipoca).

Cultural Renaissance

The role of cultural artists and writers in advancing the work of *el movimiento* should not be understated for they played a critical role in determining its ideological vision, activist work on the ground and most importantly the movements search for collective identity, a more militant, radical and activist than the one imagined earlier by the Mexican American generation of activists that followed WWII and preceded *el movimiento* generation of the 1960s and 1970s.

> From the ranks of these militant students came artists, poets and actors who collectively generated a cultural renaissance and whose work played a key role in creating the ideology of the Chicano movement (Munoz, 1989, p. 71).

Luis Valdez, one of the movements cultural leaders argued for an identity rooted in Mexicano's indigenous heritage and in its working class roots, particularly farmworker experiences. In fact, these cultural workers played a key role in producing key political and cultural artifacts of the movement: *El Plan Espiritual de Atzlan* and *El Plan de Santa Barbara,* both seminal manifestos that outlined the guiding philosophy and ideology of the movement (Acuna, 1972; Munoz, 1989). The first plane outlined the general tenets of the movement based on notions of cultural nationalism and self determination, the latter served as the founding document that created that called on university students organizations across the country to unite into one national organization, *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan* (MEChA).

Another key figure is Tomás Rivera and his now classic text, *y no se lo tragó la tierra* (1971), that traces the disabling effects of northern capitalist agricultural transformation on Mexicana/o farmworkers and various institutional mechanisms used to

maintain their subjectivity in 1950's South Texas. Part chronicle and *testimonio*, it evokes the social context and physical/geographic setting for Rivera's novel, the signs of modernity can be generalized to those described by the writers above. Rivera's work, *tierra's* modernist form and sociological critique became an inspiration and model for many Chicano/a writers who came later.

Another issue that I focus in my study is the strong internationalist character of the movement then and now. While I explore this issue in terms of educational theories and practices that inform my three sites, Valdez (2007) focuses on the cultural and artistic production of the 1960's and 1970's and points to recent Chicano/ scholarship (Oropeza 2005, Pulido 2006, Mariscal 2005) that reflects "a cultural web connecting different anti-colonial struggles around the globe". Participants with the ASCR, for example, were influenced by Mexican indigenous and decolonial social movements, particularly the Zapatista movement and its call for autonomy from NAFTA's neoliberal global economic policies.

El Movimiento in the Prisons

Another underdocumented aspect of the movement has been the political and cultural role of pintos and their impact on *el movimiento* politics (Mendoza, 2006; Gomez, 2007). This history will help contextualize my discussion of Resistencia Bookstore/Red Salmon Arts and the work of Raul Salinas, one of my three sites. This submovement of the Chicana/o movement which Salinas has described as the "prison rebellion years" in an interview with Alan Gomez (2008) were, while "physically brutal and mentally devastating," also exciting times to be organizing politically: "They were some very critical highlight moments in history, I would think, in social movements.

Because we weren't just challenging the state in an irrational, inane way, but we were very clearly outlining our arena of struggle, and what we had to deal with" (RSalinas interview in Gomez, 2008).

Prisoners were becoming "educated, helping each other to go into higher learning, to read books critically, to become writers and painters and prison barristers or, more commonly known, jail-house lawyers" (Gomez, 2008). This transformation of identity as raul describes it was focused in the prisons where raul was incarcerated along with other political prisoners, Puerto Ricans, native American, black and other Chicana/o activists. It was a time of organizing, and turning each other onto new materials that we never had the opportunity to hold in our hands, much less read; new languages that we were learning, new concepts, new paradigms, that began to make it clear to us that it was part of a colonial mindset (RSalinas interview, qtd. in Gomez, 2008).

Mendoza (2007) underscores elements of Salinas' transformation in prison as a result of particular cultural and pedagogical praxis that led to his prison activism and transformation from street hood to Chicana/o cultural worker. Both in the context from which it emerged and now, Salinas' writing needs to be seen as an intervention in the ahistorical and often dehumanizing popular discourse surrounding prisoners and crime that all too often preempts any critical discussion of the limits of the criminal justice system according to Mendoza. As part of a prisoner rights movement, he and his cohorts began to forge a radical cultural praxis that linked issues of identity with notions of power and justice, and thus cultural practices and "cultural studies" became vehicles for education and mobilization. Salinas' poetry, journalism, letters, and political archives reflect a diligent, protracted, yet deliberate process of conscientización, a feature that

undermines the framework of pathology that stamps the popular representation of prisoners (Mendoza, 2008, Introduction).

Mendoza also speaks to the function of raul's poetry and writings as *testimonio* as personal and collective documentation of prison conditions and his community. In addition to analyzing raul's poetry *as testimonio,* I will also conduct in depth interviews or life histories that function as *testimonios* of his experiences in prison and in the educational work that he did as cultural worker and political activist.

"Post el movimiento"

As we move into the 1980', we see marked changes in the political makeup of the movement from mass movement politics to more localized expressions of activist work partly due to external forces like Reaganomics. In addition to right wing retrenchment, internally feminists and gay rights advocate critiqued the masculinist and homophobic nature of Chicanismo and new organizations representing their rights emerged like the Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS) and Joto caucuses in NACCS (Segura and Pesquera 1998; Anzaldua 1987).

Another important transformation of Chicano theory and praxis are critiques of Chicano nationalist politics that had been founded on notion of *Aztlan*, the mythical homeland of Aztecs that informed Chicano nationalist ideology as well as on the northwest area of Mexico that had been wrongly expropriated as a result of the Texas independence and US Mexican war. This new Chicana/o politic, based on postmodern and postcolonial notions of the border and borderlands calls for a nationalist identity politics based on notions of hybridity, ambivalence and alterity that require new

strategies for empowerment and agency based on localized and situational contexts and politics (Perez-Torres, 1995, p. 98).

> Delimited by repressive, exploitative, discriminatory social forces, segments of this population employ strategies for empowerment and resistance at personal and interpersonal levels. The local rather than the global become site for political activity and change where new claims to land take place (98).

Perez-Torres (1995) suggests here that the changing nature of movement politics is partly due to capitalist globalization and neoliberal policies first ushered in during Reaganomics. The process of globalization and its impact on schooling practices I will take up in more detail in the latter half of this chapter. For example, the prison experiences that radicalized raul salinas, both educational and political will be explored more fully in my discussion of the RSA and Resistencia where they have impacted his work with youth as well as other participants who inspired by his political and cultural work have followed in his footsteps.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This following literature review is partially grounded in the historical narrative I presented in the first section and provides further cultural context to my study. I began that history to contextualize at one level the *testimonios* of that I propose to collect of participant's at the Advanced Seminar in Chicano/a Research (ASCR), Llano Grande Center (LGC) and the Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia (RSA) Bookstore as part of my case study of these sites. This history is thematically focused on the enduring struggles of Anglos and Mexicans in Texas. As such, I use tenets of new social movement theory that

provides another broad contextual framework along with other critical lenses to further analyze these educational contexts. I focused on the Chicana/o movement of the 1960s and 1970s to examine how those discourses and the material practices may inform the educational practices of the sites.

The literature I review in this section focuses on Chicano educators and their identity practices in relation to transformative/autonomous educational theories and pedagogies. I focus on the autochthonous cultural artifacts and tools they employ to transform conventional education into alternative sites of learning. My findings indicate that educators in these spaces employ transformative and autonomous identity, pedagogy and epistemological practices. Together, these ideologies and practices produce empowering educational frameworks through what Cummins (2000) calls "collaborative relations of power" that recognize local and community sources of knowledge outside the dominant discourse of schools (Soltero, 2008). I now turn to my literature review of alternative and activist spaces and examine how some scholars define and elaborate the constitution of transformative practices in these spaces.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES, CURRICULUMS AND SPACES

> Space is actively produced and shaped by ideology (Soja, 1989)

> Critical pedagogy should provide the theoretical tools and resources necessary for understanding how culture works as an educational force, how public education connects to other sites of pedagogy, and how identity citizenship and agency are organized through pedagogical relations and practices (Giroux and Giroux, 2008; p. 187).

Critical theorists in education contend that learning environments, formal and informal are seen as potentially transformative sites of learning that encourage participants to critique and reconstruct culture and affect social change. Henry Giroux for example says that

> (p)edagogy as a critical cultural practice needs to open up new institutional spaces in which students can experience and define what it means to be cultural producers capable of both reading different texts and producing them, of moving in and out of theoretical discourses but never losing sight of the need to theorize for themselves (1993).

This critical perspective that views schools as "sites where power struggles take place between dominant and subordinate groups" can help researchers analyze "how subordinate groups can resist this domination by examining alternative curricular spaces where this has occurred." (Cary, HO). Ellsworth (1999) as suggested earlier sees educational contexts as curricular spaces spatially using terms that evoke liminal or third spaces, border spaces, or in-between spaces. These descriptors suggest dynamic, slippery spaces where critical research and practice can occur outside or in the nexus of traditional disciplinary frameworks (Soja, 1989; Anzaldua, 1989; Bhabha, 1990). Giroux (1993) for example, in *Living Dangerously* defines such a third space in terms of "a new language that can question public forms, address social injustices, and break the tyranny of the present" (p. 28) and mines these concepts as does Ellsworth for thinking about pedagogy in new ways.

Both Soja (1989) and Giroux (1993) underscore themes that this study will engage: that certain critical ideological discourses are prevalent and shared across the three sites that I examine; that these discourses are based in certain cultural artifacts and practices that connect then as sites of critical pedagogy; and finally that these ideological

practices are integrally tied to identities that I suggested earlier are politically activist, ethnic and racialized. Both the literature of transformative and critical educational spaces of Chicana activist figured worlds of education that follow provide a powerful lens by which to examine both cognitive, conceptual practices and material practices where participants act out these discourses in potentially radical ways.

Tradition of Critical Theory

The task of the critical theorist is a socio political critique of social practices and ideology that mask systematically distorted accounts of reality that attempt to conceal and legitimate asymmetric power relations (Bottomore, 1991). This literature review presents an overview of selected texts that form the foundation for this perspective. Critical theory on education builds on the work of Althusseur (1971), Gramsci (1971), Williams (1973) and Foucault (1977) as well as the scholarship of the Frankfurt school of the 1940s, 1950s to mid 1960s led principally by Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Jurgen Habermas and Herbert Marcuse. The ideological assumptions and methodologies that underlie this theoretical approach are oriented toward radical social change, in contradistinction to positivistic forms of scientific study. For, example this approach is linked with key tenets of Marxist epistemology, namely that knowledge production involves creating new kinds of critical analysis always oriented toward the unity of theory and revolutionary practice. The aim of research and analysis is to transform society, not merely to produce new knowledge unless the latter strives to create conditions for that transformation.

Contemporary critical theorists underscore the role of institutional discourses maintain hegemony and how these discourses are produced and reproduced in systems of

domination and social formations like political and legal institutions, prisons and schools. Critical theory in education forces educators to look critically at issues of power in the schools and universities, specifically challenging and questioning the influential values, beliefs, and interests that represent the realities of only a handful in this society (Moss, 2001). Lather (1986) suggests that critical pedagogy as research model "blurs the distinctions between research, learning, and action by providing researchers and participant's opportunities to collectively engage in the struggle toward social justice".

Apple (2003) for example, whose work I focus on, has examined quite forcefully how institutional practices of schooling and education reproduce systems of domination and tied these practices to other social formations to demonstrate how this practices are intimately linked to capitalist globalization.

Greunewald (2003) also links contemporary educational practices to neoliberal capitalist-based individualism and competition that ideologically undergirds our teaching and learning. At the policy level, he argues that such federal legislation such as *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* represents an example of federal policy directly driven by practices of economic privatization is the climax of the era of high stakes standardized testing begun during the Reagan years (p. 3). Turning to now critical pedagogy, I examine some key figures in this tradition of critical and transformative practices in education before examining then how these practices are manifested in some representative Chicano/a spaces.

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy has its roots in this tradition of Marxist critical theory that I outlined above as well the works of the Frankfurt school, M. Bakhtin, A. Gramsci, P. Freire, and R. Williams just to name a few key early influential scholars. More recently,

Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, bell hooks, Gloria Ladson Billings and the work of recent Chicana/o scholars like Antonia Darder figure prominently in continuing that tradition in education. II turn first to the work of Paulo Freire (1970/1995) who articulated key foundational tenets of critical pedagogy. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, for example, he describes the role of educator as fundamental to the development of student *conscientizacion*. This construct describes the process of achieving a form of critical consciousness through a protracted and collaborative engagement between educator and students focused on the world and word.

As opposed to "banking" forms of teaching and knowledge that simply reproduce conditions of subordination and subalternity, the forms of critical instruction espoused by Frerian approaches are based on a dialectical and dialogic process of reflection and change that transforms participants into critical thinkers and doers. Teacher and student are co-collaborators of learning process where the educator's role is "to teach, not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge" (Freire, 1998; p. 30). One way to achieve this is by concretizing abstract teaching and learning that links subject matter to local and global issues that makes knowledge real and concrete and to effect change ultimately. Rather than knowledge for knowledge sakes, teachers and students are engaged in continuous reflection of their own situation in order to critically act upon it (p. 90).

More recent critics as well as the participants in the sites I examine have expanded on this notion of world and word. Greunewald (2003) for example suggest the reading the world as political text and reading traditional print based texts in context of the world. This provides teachers and students a space by which to critically engage "in reflection and action—or praxis—in order to understand, and, where necessary, to change

the world (p. 5). This idea of pedagogy is also what drives the educational practices I've found in these sites through my work as participant. Their practices it would seem represent a form of local, autochthonous popular education that is designed to raise the critical consciousness of its participants by connecting their personal experiences to larger societal problems fundamentally challenge the assumptions, practices and outcomes of traditional education. As they reflect on these relationships and how larger issues negatively impact them, participants individually and collectively are empowered to act to effect change on the problems that affect them.

As I suggested above, Apple (2004) is also a key figure in the literature focusing the nexus of relationships between ideological values and schooling. Building on Gramsci (1971) and Williams (2003), he uses their concepts of hegemony, ideology and selective tradition to examine school issues using a relational analysis. As he puts it, the role of critical scholarship engages in research that situates the knowledge, school/educational site and educator within real social conditions that determine the elements guided by social and economic justice (p. 11). This approach uncovers how social and economic values are embedded in the "formal corpus of school knowledge:" 1) in the curricula; 2) in the modes of teaching; 3) in our principles standards; and 4) in the forms of evaluation and assessment (8). His version of social reproduction theory demonstrates how schooling functions to engrain these deep-seated values and categories, commonsensical or constitutive rules that guide our behavior and how we see reality (8).

In his classic study of the role of education in capitalist society, *Curriculum and Ideology*, Apple (2004) begins by tracing the origins of formal curricular practices to the principles of social control and scientific management espoused in Taylorism (pp. 44-45). While Taylorism as a corporate management tool functioned generally to control worker

production in the factories at the turn of the 20th century, Apple links this form of labor control to the socialization function of schools as well:

> Education plays a mediating role between individual consciousness and society at large. The rules which govern social behavior, attitudes, morals, and beliefs are filtered down form macro level political and economic structures to the individual via work experience, educational processes, family socialization. This understanding and attitude toward the social order constitutes his consciousness (pp. 32-33).

One way that schools mediate those values and beliefs is via a *selective tradition* (Williams, 1977) that privileges certain dominant social and cultural practices in the schools. These institutions like the schools are the ideological apparati of the state that re/produce the economic and social stratification in society. As Williams (1977) argued in his work *Marxism and Literature*, the dominant culture creates a selective tradition by which certain knowledges—epistemologies, ontologies and ethics are valued over others. This selective tradition is operationalized through the theories and practices or *discourses* in Foucauldian parlance of disciplines and fields in universities and colleges and via curriculum and pedagogies in the schools.

This selective tradition produces a particular kind of individual subjectivity and educated person socialized for the capitalist regimes of work and citizenship. Via the selection, preservation and sustaining dominant values, norms, competence and knowledges that are embedded in the curriculum and pedagogies in schools, both overt and hidden, produces and constitutes a person's dispositions, subjectivities and identities (pp. 57-58). The "knowledge that got into schools in the past and gets into schools now is not random. It is selected and organized around sets of principles and values that come from somewhere, that represent particular views of normality and deviance…" (p. 63). Key to his analysis is the role and function of the *hidden curriculum* in the maintenance

of power by elites. I describe this process in some detail to point out how certain educational practices in these sites work to disrupt this mechanism of control in subtle ways.

One important concept in critical pedagogy is the idea of the hidden curriculum the form that ideological hegemony assumes in schooling practices according to Apple (2004). It functions as a key mechanism by which elites transmit dominant norms, values, and beliefs. It does this work through both formal and informal educational content that is taught as well as through social interactions that predominate within schools. While content plays an important role, the role that educators play in their inaction with students is key to successfully maintaining hegemony. Riffing somewhat on Althusseur (1971) as well, Apple argues that schools are one of the principal mediating institutions between capitalist political economy and family and work and the hidden curriculum is that "formal corpus of school knowledge" used to *interpellate* students into subjects of the corporate state.

Role of Educators

Apple argues similarly how the selective tradition is operationalized in the schools but also how educators can work to disrupt these practices by actively engaging students in the manner proposed by Freire above. Apple (2006) sees educators and intellectuals as forming a key role in either reproduction of critique of hegemonic discourses in the classroom or other educational spaces. They are essential to the production and reproduction of agents to fill roles of technicians and to the reproduction of dispositions and meanings in these agents, he says (p. 12).

As intellectuals, they either play a part in maintenance of ideological hegemony, they employ and give legitimacy to the categories and structures of feelings produced by the economic order (p. 9). If educators and researchers are to play a role in unmasking these processes, the task of educational researchers is to unveil links between education and the "economic, social, and ideological structures outside of the school buildings" (Apple, 2006). It is in the interplay between curricular knowledge and the social relations of the classroom where we see links with unequal economic structure relations in society (p. 38). School is an active force that serves to give legitimacy to economic and social forms and ideologies intimately connected to it (p. 39). They contribute to inequality in that they are tactitly organized to differentially distribute specific kinds of knowledge (p. 41).

Joe Kincheloe (2008) another key figure in this critical tradition made this point as well in his classic text *Critical Pedagogy*:

> A central tenet of critical pedagogy maintains that the classroom, curricular, school structures teachers enter are not neutral sites waiting to be shaped by educational professionals. While such professionals do possess agency, this prerogative is not completely free and independent of decisions made previously by people operating with different values and shaped by the ideologies and cultural assumptions of their historical contexts. These contexts are shaped in the same ways language and knowledge are constructed, as historical power makes particular practices seem natural—as if they could have been constructed in no other way (p. 2).

This idea that the classroom is a politically charged space with potentially competing discourses and ideologies resonates with earlier critical theory regarding the function of schooling and research praxis. In addition to theses insights, I want to suggest that the work of recent critical race, standpoint and subaltern and post colonial criticism adds another critical dimension to my analytic framework that namely adds race

to the calculus. As I suggested in the historical section that began this chapter, race and colonialism were key themes of that history of Anglo and Mexican relations. This legacy remains in various manifestations, in the social and cultural practices of institutions like the schools that I focus on in this study. De Lissovoy (2008a) makes this convincing argument for new research that "reflects the interests and needs of new modes of colonialism and empire. Such dynamics must be exposed, understood, and acted upon as part of critical transformative praxis."

This latter point I will return to in my discussion of critical race, standpoint and subaltern theory has advanced current educational research. Like Freire (1972) and Apple (206), their work proposes the mapping of larger global forces with local knowledge of the community as part of a critical pedagogy that enacts change for participants. I want to suggest as well that based on my preliminary findings, the LGC, ASCR and RSA are also actively engaged in producing alternative and activist spaces based local situated theories, in tandem with larger global critiques. I further explore how these autochthonous forms of epistemologies and pedagogies actively produce activist identity practices that counter the contemporary forms of the hidden curriculum as they are manifested locally in theses sites.

Texas' Hidden Curriculum

As suggested above, critical pedagogy provides the means by which to uncover and reveal these processes of reproduction in education. It provides researchers the cultural tools to make concrete connections between macro societal constructs and micro spaces like schools to examine their effects (Wink, 1997). My study examined the form that these cultural tools or artifacts assume in these spaces that work to disrupt the work of the hidden curriculum especially as they are manifested here in Texas. I also examined

how these educational practices are tied to identity practices and to ideological discourses and material practices that predominate so that a revisioning of the educated person may be realized. Our current perspective is flawed clearly. One only needs to look at the deplorable drop out statistics of Latina/o and Mexicano children and our increasing prison population. In response, these sites demonstrate how their vision of educated person, perhaps based on a more critical and activist vision provides a real alternative as evidenced by their success. For example, here in Texas I examined the local forms that hidden curriculum takes, like high stakes testing and the accountability policies that drive education policies and pedagogy in our schools, universities and colleges.

Based on my findings, participants are countering these hegemonic practices with instructional and curricular practices that are local and autochthonous, transformative and autonomous. One of the forms that these critical pedagogies and curriculums take are the cultural production of unofficial histories or counterstories created by both students and teachers as co-collaborators and co researchers that also link to transformative praxis in their communities. The identity practices that result in these spaces are activist and transformative and resist dominant and technocratic processes of interpellation that reflect the demands of global capitalism and its search for technicians. I turn now to the work of critical theorists who articulate transformative practices in terms of spatial relations as suggested by Ellsworth (1999), Bhabha (2000) and Anzaldua (1989) above.

Spaces of Transformation, Crucibles of Change

This tradition of scholarship within transformative theories and pedagogies who focus on spaces and places of learning build on the works of Henri Lefebvre, Ed Soja, David Harvey and Homi Bhabha for example. These scholars critically explore the geographies and spatialities of social phenomenon beyond traditional critical categories

and constructs. This is important to my work because participants in thee spaces have articulated their practices in terms of place-based practices and pedagogies. Space and place figure prominently in their theorization and in their material practices as I've discovered.

Conceptualizing society in terms of spatial metaphors and concepts complicates the analysis of relations of power and to how they function to structure space and place and to theorize how the spatiality may provide a basis for political action and struggle (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1989; Harvey, 1989; Bhabha, 1997). Anzaldua (1989) for example theorizes on third spaces as potentially radical sites where social and cultural critics can examine how forms of resistance and reproduction operate in liminal spaces, in the cusps and crevices of discursive and material practices, those messy spaces where new knowledge is sometimes produced (Russel Rodriguez, 2007). These in between, borderland spaces she argues are ripe for a "politics of location" from which to examine contemporary and nuanced versions of activism and transformation (hooks, 1991).

I concur with Anzaldua (1989) and the participants in these spaces who have articulated their critical practices and spaces in spatial terms. As I pointed out above, these sites occupy in between spaces of teaching and learning. In the case of the LGC, their space of practice resides between their local high school and various informal community sites of learning in the Delta region of the valley. The RSA's work focuses on sites in east and south Austin but forged with linkages to local universities via key participants. Participants with the ASCR created a space both inside and outside the university as well that offered a safe space for graduate students to successfully bride academic and community work. This suggests that teaching and learning spaces that actively promote critical research and practice can occur outside or in the nexus of

traditional disciplinary frameworks and that evoke liminal or third spaces, border spaces, or in-between spaces that employ more dynamic and slippery analytic categories and metaphors by which to examine teaching and learning.

These "anomalous spaces of learning" that occur "far from schools as centers of learning" do in fact promote practices of transformative critical pedagogy, according Ellsworth (2005, p. 5). These spaces also potentially impact identity formation and knowledge practice where relations between the self and the social political body are created and where critical, transformative learning occurs. (p. 131). Miguel Guajardo (2004) for example describes the work of the Llano Grande Center (LGC) in terms congruous to Ellsworth notion of anomalous spaces, as a reality-based pedagogy outside traditional pedagogy and based instead on the lived social realities of local communities. These place-based pedagogies, grounded in the day to day lived realities of local communities

> creates places of learning that are half living and function as a promise as that which, in the future, in retrospect, yield a destination or effect, another thing. It is not curriculum per se that fixes knowledge in a grid of fixed and static knowledge, instead it become lived, reality-based pedagogy (Ellsworth 2005, p. 165).

This epistemology that is grounded and responds to the day to day reality of its local community is an approach to understanding the nature of social phenomenon on its own terms and is precisely what Ellsworth means when she calls for the type of pedagogical approaches that emerge organically from local sites and practices such as found in the LGC. "In the process of inventing ways to see and say new things, student and teachers are experiencing and creating pedagogy in the making and not as some static, prescribed pedagogical code or language." (Ellsworth 2005, pp. 130-31, p. 165)

This form of knowledge production is formed outside the purview of the hidden curriculum as described by Apple (2004) that structures "pedagogy through a silence that demarcates the limits of what we can teach and know" (Ellsworth. 2005; p. 156). These third or anomalous spaces produce particular forms of knowledge based on "felt qualitative transformation" of "learning and the conditions of that learning's emergence: a pedagogy" (p. 131). This notion of pedagogy resonates with Guajardo's place-based pedagogy that builds on local family-based epistemologies (Hidalgo, 2005) to guide their educational and research practices and with Bourdieu (1997) who calls for critical epistemologies outside objectivism and subjectivism (Bourdieu, 1997). In sum, a third space "between emotion and cognition" where "sensation has ontological priority over language and knowledge" (Ellsworth 1999, p. 155) that functions as foundation for new forms of teaching and learning.

Identity Practices and Spatiality

Henry Giroux in *Living Dangerously* (1993) has also theorized how critical pedagogy must engage with spatial discourses and similarly argues for a pedagogy of place that "address the specificities of the experiences, problems, languages and histories that students and communities rely upon to construct a narrative of collective identity" (p. 121). The cultural tools and artifacts in these spaces also impact identity practices and have the potential to "open up new institutional spaces in which students can experience and define what it means to be cultural producers capable of both reading different texts and producing them, of moving in and out of theoretical discourses but never losing sight of the need to theorize for themselves". The identity practices of the LGC for example

are empowered expressions that constitute students as community researchers, the ASCR as incarnate intellectuals and the RSA as poets and writers.

This focus on critical place-based pedagogies is transformative in the way that it rejects "the mandates of a standardized, "placeless' curriculum and settle for the abstractions and simulations of classroom learning" (Greunewald, 2003). McLaren and Giroux (1990) concur and suggest that critical pedagogies of place have the potential to "address the specificities of the experiences, problems, languages and histories that communities rely upon to construct a narrative of collective identity and possible transformation" (p. 263). Ultimately, the work of the LGC challenges the dominant standards and test driven discourse and pedagogy that elide local, situated experiences and knowledges. These practices are the basis for my selection of these sites as representative of transformative Chicano pedagogy and the role that key actors play in creating successful outcomes. I end this section by reflecting on how my preliminary observations and conversations with key actors of these sites align with the literature I have just outlined and subverts the hidden curriculum that Apple (2006) has defined.

Critical Pedagogy in Chicana/o Spaces

> Cultural resistance is not a totalizing affair, but one based on particular struggles and negotiations waged on turf that, in the grander scheme of things, may appear of little consequence. But this negotiation cannot be ignored. Producing a place in which one's collective identity is forged to a principle of solidarity affects, quite significantly, the social construction of reality. The purpose of such activity is to control one's world and oppose those who have other plans (Flores, 2002).

Although there is a long tradition of research that explores educational contexts that are creating the means for access and success, little work has been done with regards to Chicana activist spaces with the exception of the following literature. While not

exhaustive, it does point to the sort of practices that I will explore in my study. What is missing in the literature are more in depth explorations of identity practices that lend themselves to new conceptions of agency and the role that both pedagogy and epistemological discourses play in enacting activist identities especially in Texas-based contexts. In addition, I propose to expand this literature by exploring relationships between the formation of activist identities enacted via Chicana/o transformative ideologies and practices as articulated within *el movimiento* and its 21st century variant.

The following studies employ a variety of critical and more organic theoretical approaches that open new lines of inquiry and situate my study. Similarly, my study engages multiple, *mezcla* of lenses as a way to understand the importance of creating alternative, third spaces where students can self author and self represent. These multiple lens more effectively reflect/refract the multiple, messy practices that these hybrid spaces evoke (Russel Rodriguez, 2007). Tijerina Revilla (2004) for example uses *mujerista* theory and pedagogy, an organic feminista-based theoretical framework to describe how a campus organization of Chicanas and Latinas, *Raza Womyn*, have created a safe space for feminist activists to work on their research and pedagogical practices. Participants in the sites I examine also envision their spaces as safe havens from traditional educational contexts. For many of the Chicano/a graduate students who work at the RSA, the space provided by raul salinas at Resistencia bookstore functioned as a respite from a sometimes alienating academic life.

Olivos' (2004) study examines the role of Latino parents in the public education system as key institutional agents who participate in various forms of resistance as a response to oppressive school policies and practices that alienate their children. Olivos (2004) suggests that Latino parents can challenge and even transform school policies and

practices when accompanied by critical consciousness underscoring the importance of parental and community engagement in changing school policies and practices. At the LGC, community members have played a key role as institutional agents in enacting the kind of changes that have brought success to students and local neighborhoods.

The following studies by Arriaza (2004) and Reyes (2004) explore linkages between Chicana/o movement discourses and educational contexts and how processes of subjectivity and identity formation figure participants and the important role that local communities play in these figurations. Arriaza (2004) argues that school reform initiatives have higher chances of becoming institutionalized when the community actively participates as empowered change agents. Arriaza (2004) begins by historicizes Mexican American parent community involvement in California to contextualize his later site analysis. This long tradition of struggles over education by the Latino/a community he argues underscores the importance of community involvement on local school renewal, and the lasting effects of such agency especially as when politics are informed by local control and democratic political discourses. In particular, he looks at the more immediate effects of the Chicnao/a activism in the 1970s and their impact in the education of Chicano/a, Latina/o children now. Arriaza's California focus while insightful will provide comparative lens to my Texas specific study like Reyes (2004) work on Texas migrant students to which I now turn.

Reyes' (2004) qualitative case study examines the educational struggles of Texas based Chicana/o high school migrant students and the relationship dynamics that result from the work of advocate educators. The author contends that detrimental schooling practices can be circumvented by educators acting as agents of change, developing alternative schooling experiences, and valuing the human resources found within the

migrant educational community. This study also focused on their relationship to Chicano movement politics so has particular salience to my study.

Educators in this study created a critically conscious agenda that was inherent to the relationship between Chicana/o high school migrant students' educational opportunities and the social justice ideals of *el movimiento*. The discursive and material practices of social movement that informed their educational practices have a direct effect on student outcomes. Similarly, I explore those pedagogical and curricular practices based on new revised set of contemporary Chicano/a theories and practices. Like the LGC, the next study I turn to uses Chicano pedagogy to enact a particular vision of educated person, a critically informed teacher who consciously performs activist identity practices.

Berta-Avila's (2004) study uses Xicana/Xicano framework and critical pedagogy to understand how Chicana/o educators perceive their role in the classroom when teaching Mexicano students. She focuses on what it means to be a critical educator when teaching is viewed as a political act for social transformation and the emancipation of students. These educators strategically use their identity as a process of self reflection on their teaching practices. It is also thematically aligned with my study's focus on the building of collaborative student/teacher relationships and development of critical curriculums to enact Chicana/o agency.

One of the central questions of this study explored the content of Chicano transformative pedagogy and knowledge production in these spaces. In addition, I also focus on formal elements that these practices of knowledge production assume in these sites. By formal elements I mean for example understanding the role and greater salience of language and discourse as elements of these practices. Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001)

and Fairclough (2003) for example suggest that texts, like the interviews I collect or the curriculum that is produced in educational contexts, have causal and ideological effects (p. 9). Texts can inculcate and sustain or change ideologies (Fairclough, 2003). "They can bring about changes in our knowledge, our beliefs, our attitudes, values" and as such can maintain of effect changes in identities as well (p. 8).

Holland et al (1998) articulates this idea in terms of "spaces of authoring" where participants create sites that create the conditions, like in curricular practices in educational contexts, for envisioning new ways of theorizing and praxis by educators. The durability of the ideologies that prevail in these spaces can be examined in terms of "discourses (as representation), genres (as enactments) and styles (as inculcations)" that make up the production of texts (Fairclough, 2003). This allows for analysis of the process that educators in these spaces of authoring "make or "texture texts by setting up relations between these elements" (p. 9). In this respect, I am better able to critically examine whether these sites are in fact producing transformative discourses and possibilities and agentic, activist identities or simply reproducing colonial discourses that reproduce traditional practices and positionalities.

For example, Franquiz and Salazar (2004) examine student's understandings of key elements that fostered their academic resilience using cultural and educational practices based on local authothonous constructs and understandings. These key elements; *respeto* (respect), *confianza* (mutual trust), *consejos* (verbal teachings) and *buen ejemplos* (emplary models) are more organic and dynamic approaches to understanding student success. The forms these practices are grounded in the daily lived realities of Chicana/o communities rather than in abstract and conventional text-based instruction that banks knowledge. The authors found that teachers who practice this form

of humanizing pedagogy (unlike TAKS-based subtractive models) fostered healthy educational orientations among Chicana/o adolescents, which in turn results in their academic resiliency against all odds. According to their findings, *respeto* or respect "was the bonding agent for Chicano/Mexicano youth to embrace trust, verbal teachings and exemplary people into their lives."

Robinson's (2007) work examines how the teaching of history based on revisionist historiographies changed the classroom dynamic from banking model that focuses on textbook approaches to one of critical reflection:

> These are powerful pedagogical lessons that can reshape urban education history classrooms. The practices that support disciplined revisionist historical inquiry reshape the classroom world. Memorization is no longer sufficient to centrally participate within this type of classroom world; rather, synthesis, reflection, argument, writing and debate become the norm (p. 213).

This form of disciplined ethnographic and historical inquiry that produces revisionist history via oral and life histories of local community instead of solely textbook guided instruction makes that history real and concrete by focusing attention on the narratives of local folk. Robinson also suggests how these instructional practices can positively impact student identities:

> Revisionist history creates opportunities for students to come into contact with the lives of their past—others who shared similar backgrounds (ethnicity, gender, SES, geographic area, etc.), struggles, successes and failures. Disciplined revisionist historical inquiry also creates opportunities for students to share their experiences and their experiences in relationship to the past as they create historical narratives. It also creates opportunities for students to refigure themselves into their classroom and schooling worlds (p. 212).

Through the sharing of oral narratives with the greater Chicano/a community, like the LGC youth who have collected and archived for community use, new interpretative

communities are created (Plummer, 1983) that actively produce their own memories. These collectively shared memories that Stewart (1990) refers to as forms of "resistive" nostalgia counter mainstream narratives that form part of that selective tradition (Williams, 1977) or "national symbolic" (Berlant, 1993). This next section will explore the theories and discourses upon which much of the critical pedagogies and curriculums that I've outlined are based. I begin first with standpoint epistemologies and key proponents then turn my attention to the work of certain critical race and LatCrit theorists to help further extend my conceptual framework.

CRITICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE EPISTEMOLOGIES

> The politics of knowledge and issues of epistemology are central to understanding the way power operates in educational institutions to perpetuate privilege and to subjugate the marginalized--"validated" scientific knowledge can often be used as a basis of oppression as it is produced without an appreciation of how dominant power and culture shape it (Kinchloe, 2008).

Critical and autochthonous epistemologies form the foundation of critical practices in the educational contexts I examine for the reasons that Kinchloe articulates above. Therefore, I believe it is key to examine the literature of two traditions of critical epistemologies that have taken to task the scientific and objectivist standpoints based on patriarchal, western european and enlightenment based ways of knowing and knowledge production. While feminist standpoint takes issue with the patriarchal effects, Chicana feminists and CRT and LatCrit theorists expose the colonial and neocolonial forms of structuration.

Gender and Race-based Epistemologies

Critical, standpoint and autochthonous epistemologies provide for frameworks that map the conceptual practices through which particular institutions like the discipline of education, its specific schooling practices and ideologies have maintained their oppressive forms of power (Apple, 2004; Harding, 2004; Haraway, 2004; Delgado Bernal, 1999). According to Cockburn (2007), standpoint theories "privilege difference and positionality and the recognition of multiple differences and positionings based in intersecting dimensions of power and domination (typically race, class, and gender) (qtd. in Lutjens, 2009).

Standpoint theory and methodology captures perspectives that differ from western capitalist rationality and research studies based on that perspective. An important assumption underlying these critical theories is the idea that mainstream research and social theory informed by positivist logic are tied to capitalist practices of power, namely its conceptual apparatus through which oppression in its myriad forms is ideologically maintained through dominant discursive practices. More recently, the contributions of Black and Latina/Chicana scholars have underscored how this dominant European or *whitestream* perspective also has a racial component. This literature review will explore the tenets of Chicana feminist standpoint theory to further complexify the identity and critical pedagogy approaches I will use. It provides another critical lens by which to use race as a category to explore racist ideological justification part and parcel of neocolonial practices of certain disciplinary discourses and material practices.

Standpoint approaches also provide for examining how day-to-day lived realities account for counter hegemonic practices since these approaches privilege narrative inquiry as a viable means of data collection and analysis . This set of conceptual and

methodological tools enable "new perspectives and new ways of seeing the world" that have heretofore been either silenced or discredited on the basis of sexist, racist or classist assumptions (Harding, 2004; Harstock, 2004; Delgado Bernal, 2004; Ladson Billings , 1998; Solarzano, 1997). This form of knowledge production based on privileged perspectives of marginalized and subaltern via *testimonios* and through in depth personal interviews are the basis for critical case studies that I undertake. When used to not only document but effect change, these local, autochthonous texts provide researchers and participants in these spaces with critical insight and conceptual tools to transform participants.

Feminists have long posited the necessity of standpoint epistemology, meaning the production of knowledge that originates from the thought of marginalized lives (Harding, 1993). Standpoint theorists assert that the inability of dominant groups to recognize and question their positions of privilege, and hence their assumed objectivity and neutrality, places them at an epistemological disadvantage for producing knowledge. Women can provide the starting point for asking new, critical questions about not only those women's lives but also about men's lives and, most importantly, the causal relations between the (Harding, 1993; p.55). This issue is explored in detail in an article that proposes a "sacred space" for which to explore these questions (Soto, Cervantes, Villarreal and Campos, 2009). I begin with early feminist standpoint theory and their key assumptions about the patriarchal nature of knowledge production and how feminist standpoint might counteract it.

Critical Forms of Epistemologies/Towards Subjectivist and Experientialist Knowledge Production

A central premise of standpoint theory critiques the positivistic logic of traditional social science research and its appeals to strict objectivity and social neutrality (Harding, 2004). Harding and other feminist scholars have shown that all knowledge is partial and situated and heavily invested in one's positionality. This set of conceptual and methodological tools enable "new perspectives and new ways of seeing the world" (Harding, 2004) that have heretofore been either silenced or discredited on the basis of sexist, racist or classist assumptions.

Harstock (2004) for example argues for a specific feminist materialism to account for analyzing structures of women's oppression based on sexual division of labor that foregrounds how systematic structural factors account for women's oppression rather than based on individual factors solely that has led to their marginalized status historically and in the present (ibid, p.18). From this epistemic position grounded in women's material activity as a basis to redefine and restructure society feminists can more effectively work against patriarchy based phallocentric ideologies and institutions (ibid 50). Moreover, standpoint feminists argue that their analyses are privileged perspectives by virtue of their marginalized status gained through a history of political and cultural struggle with dominant standpoints, historically gendered and racially-based.

Through struggle with whitestream and malestream standpoints, feminist standpoint creates new radical forms of knowledge. In fact, we find that through long-term protracted struggles like social movements, they become the crucibles where gaps in the structure are exposed. These gaps reveal linkages between western phallocentric epistemologies, ontologies and ethics and the structural inequalities maintained and preserved ideologically and symbolically, along gender, race and class lines. This

argument critiques the so called objectivity and social neutrality that traditional science espouses that forms the basis of traditional conceptions of knowledge production. Rather, standpoint feminism posits that knowledge is in fact politically achieved through conflict and contestation of oppressed groups and not via rational, objectivist detachment free from emotion and affect.

Therefore, since marginalized groups have always contested their subjugation and knowledges and discourses used to subject them, their politically achieved insights provide them with critical perspectives and conceptual tools to change their marginal social status. Harding's (2004) notion of "strong objectivity" or "objectivity with passionate detachment" as she puts it, is founded on a conception of feminist objectivity that is about particular and specific embodiment achieved through struggle and not based on detached abstract masculinist objectivity. This conception of the research theory and practice turns on its head the notion of scientific objectivity as a privileging of quantitative forms of evidence and evaluative criteria to validate one's research vs more subjectivist approaches like experiential knowledge as a criterion of "truth". Relatedly, these critical qualitative research approaches are connected to new postmodernist practice of researcher reflexivity that close rather than expands the distance between research and participant. I will say more about this in my methods chapter.

Situated Knowledges

Scholars of feminist standpoint epistemology argue that women and other marginal groups represent subjugated standpoints that are preferred because they promise more adequate, sustained, objective, transforming accounts of the world: "There is a premium on establishing the capacity to see from the peripheries and depths" (Harstock, 2004, p. 88). Haraway (1987) calls it an epistemology of location and positioning,

"where partiality is the condition of making rational knowledge claims" that focuses on the partial nature of knowledge production or "situated knowledges".

Anzaldua (1987), Sandoval (1999), and Haraway (1987) similarly argue for a commitment to mobile positioning and to passionate detachment dependent on the impossibility of innocent identity politics and epistemologies as strategies for seeing from the standpoints of the subjugated in order to see well. "Such objectivity is a practice that privileges contestation, deconstruction, passionate construction, networks of relations that cover the world and include the ability to partially translate knowledges between communities that are themselves very different and differentiated in terms of power" (Corsani 2006, http://transform.eipcp.net/transversal/0406/corsani/en). Participants in the sites I examine are conscious practitioners of critical pedagogies founded on local, situated and experiential forms of epistemologies; the LGC relies on family epistemologies (Guajardo, 2004), the ASCR on subaltern epistemologies (Callahan email correspondence) and the RSA on medicine stories to guide their work (SOY documentary, E. Campos co-director).

Preciado (2005) makes a similar point: "Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. In this way we might become answerable for what we learn how to see." The politics of situated knowledges can then be conceived as the politics of knowledges that connect differences and that establish rhizomatic alliances in discontinuity and not in consensus, a politics made up of networks of differential positionings, to use Chela Sandoval's terms (Corsani, 2006). This latter point regarding network affiliations will be a focus of my examination of how new social movement practices may define the 21st century version of *el movimiento*. I will explore forms of cross fertilization between the

larger macro world of Chicano/a activist practice and discourses and these sites as well as between each of the three sites. The fact that many of the participants I interview have been and are still active in multiple sites will help facilitate this line of inquiry. I turn now to how Black and especially Chicana feminists have extended feminist standpoint to include race and ethnic perspectives.

Chicana Feminist Standpoint

More recently, black and Chicana standpoint theorists have included race alongside gender and class as categories of analysis in education (Collins, 1986; hooks, 1990; Delgado-Bernal, 1998; Sandoval, 2004). Chicana feminists have deployed standpoint theory as a radical and critical conceptual framework that constructs Chicanas and Latinas as subjects and as legitimate authors of new knowledge. Standpoint epistemologies become of utmost importance to Chicana students, researchers, and scholars whose experience in academia are complicated by the interaction of more than one layer of their social locations including gender, race/ethnicity, class, language, and immigration status. Their epistemologies legitimize their social and cultural history, experiences, and their great potential to design and conduct educational research that can impact the daily lives in their communities.

Some of the most important advances in standpoint theory are by Indigenous, Black and Chicana third wave feminists (Smith, 1999; hooks, 1993; Anzaldua, 1987; Sandoval, 2004; Delgado-Bernal, 2001; Villenas, 1999). Smith (1999) for example couples european with indigenous epistemes to produce new forms of research and knowledge, a kind of *borderlands* thinking that Anzaldua (1987) and standpoint feminists have called on others to move beyond western european and traditional resistive and oppositional categories. They articulate the notion of a "third space of enunciation"

would produce new border epistemologies whose aims are political and ethical transformations (Mignolo, 2000).

Mignolo (2000) is important for my discussion here for he captures the essence of local, situated subaltern forms of epistemologies like Chicana standpoint and how they may help us to imagine future possibilities in educational contexts. Mignolo (2000) suggests that Anzaldua's metaphor of the "border" and "borderland thinking" provides researchers with categories and conceptual arsenal to "think otherwise" and to "move beyond categories created and imposed by Western epistemology" (p. 11). When researchers engage in border thinking he says, it provides them with an epistemology to think "from the interior exteriority of the border". "That is to say, of engaging the colonialism of Western epistemology (from the left and from the right) from the perspective of epistemic forces that had been turned into subaltern (traditional, folkloric, religious, emotional, etc.) forms of knowledge" (p. 11). This epistemological space, or "third space of enunciation" that emerges from the perspectives of subaltern coloniality in the final analysis "aims towards political and ethical transformations".

Other Chicana feminists like Alarcon (2002) Sandoval (2000), Anzaldua (1989) and Perez (1999) riff on this notion of third space as a site where new constructs of "resistant, oppositional, transformative and diasporic subjectivities can be molded into "decolonial desires" (Perez, 1999). Alarcon (2002) describes third space similarly as "a site of textual production—the historical and ideological moment in which the subject inscribes herself contextually" (pp. 116-17). Using CDA as described by Fairclough (2003) will help me locate specific "historical and ideological moments" in the transcriptions of my participant interviews and analyze whether these sites might be read as third space sites of production suggested by Alarcon and others. As Delgado Bernal

(1998) correctly points out, using Chicana feminist epistemology in educational research is one means of resisting traditional paradigms that often distort or omit the experiences and knowledge of Chicana/os (Delgado Bernal, 1998).

Chicana standpoint scholars have directly affected how pedagogy and research is practiced in schools and universities as evidenced by recent studies (Martinez, 1996; Lopez, 1998; Arredondo, 2003; Flores, 2000; Hurtado, 1998; Bejarano, 2005; Soto, Cervantes-Soon, Villarreal and Campos, 2009). Standpoint theory underscores the role that engaged political struggle, whether collectively engaged or in daily, lived moments, is part of pedagogical practice of educators and that engaged struggle produces new knowledge. Contextualizing my sites in terms of enduring political and cultural struggles and generational micro cohort expressions of *el movimiento* and of the new Chicana/o movement, will help me articulate how these sites are producing standpoint perspectives based in Chicana/o epistemologies as well as enacting Chicana/o activist identities.

Decolonial and Indigenous Theory

The work of Black, Indigenous and Chicana standpoint theorists also resonates with decolonizing criticism that focuses on racial constructions of subaltern communities of color. According to decolonial theory, forms of coloniality still persist and define social relations and practices of modernity. This *colonial difference* is frequently articulated through structural and institutional racist practices that as CRT critics also contend are permanent and endemic components of US society and thus not easily dismissed by recent colorblind arguments. These theories demonstrate how colonialism, race and white supremacy are interconnected social dimensions of US society linked to prisons, schools, legal and political institutions. An important critique of decolonialist an indigenous discourse focuses how dominant research practices were founded on colonial

practices to advance its modernist project and still true in contemporary neocolonial disciplinary practices (LT Smith, 1999; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo, 2000). Scheurich and Young (1997) for example also argue this point:

Epistemological racism means that our current range of research epistemologies—positivism to postmodernisms/poststructuralisms—arise out of the social history and culture of the dominant race, that these epistemologies logically reflect and reinforce that social history and that racial group (while excluding the epistemologies of other races/cultures) (1997, p. 8).

Mignolo (2000) argues similarly that theories from both the right and left, neoliberal to Marxist macro narratives are in different ways still dominant models premised on western european epistemologies. Imposing a Marxist framework based on the realities of 19th century proletariat experiences onto the history and experiences of indigenous populations of the Americas is problematic he argues. We need locally based forms to understand and imagine possible futures "that derive an ethics and ethos" from standpoints closer to say the border experiences of Chicano/a communities here in Texas.

Both feminist standpoint and decolonalism advance a critique of the patriarchal and race- based theories, epistemologies, ontologies and pedagogies that help reinforce structural inequities including schooling institutions. In response, they advocate indigenous, place based, autochthonous epistemologies and pedagogies to critique race-based inequities and to provide alternative research strategies and education models. Using these lenses in tandem keeps race and gender in the foreground of my theoretical analysis and serves as bridge between race and gender, social identity, critical and new social movement theory. It will help me theorize how discourses of race and racism are constitutive features of and operate within US social structures including schools and

universities and other informal spaces of learning and spaces where they have been contested effectively in transformative ways.

Scholars of narrative inquiry also suggest that methodological approaches that employ stories and *testimonios* function most effectively to capture these experiences. These tools provide for more nuanced and complex exploration of individual lives that other research methods lack. It is for this reason that LGC consultants have also used this research approach to conduct their work. This use of narrative inquiry as a form of critical epistemological practice employs stories as valid data collection methods. Aguirre (2005) also makes this claim as well. He argues that narrative inquiry provides a valid methodology that alongside more traditional data collection gives a fuller, more holistic account. This approach uses a variety of research practices, ranging from those that tell a story of how individuals understand their actions through oral and written accounts of historical episodes to those that explore certain methodological aspects of storytelling. The use of narrative inquiry enables researchers and writers to show that social reality is a layered phenomenon that requires subjectivity based on personal experiences and intuitiveness as interpretive guides for its study (Van Maanen, 1988; Delgado, 1989; Richardson, 1990, 1997; Bell, 1999).

Narrative based inquiry as Aguirre (2005) explains provides researchers with powerful analytic tools that focus on the personal, subjective experiences of participants that quantitative research may overlook. This methodology provides for a more nuanced examination of day-to-day educational practices that surveys or other forms of data collection often overlook. Capturing data from *testimonios*, life histories and in-depth interviews of my participants, as well as my participant/observation notes and document

analysis maps a more layered and complex narrative. I will have more to say about this methodology in Chapter 3 of my study.

My findings suggest that these sites I examine are spaces where local, situated forms of knowledge production are occurring. These sites may be seen in terms of hybrid/third spaces of autonomous cultural practices where as Alarcon describes "one discovers diverse cultural narratives formations, translations, appropriations and recodifications which generate texts which are hybrid or syncretic … and bring into view new subjects in process" (Alarcon 1996, p. 273). The model of educated persons in these spaces take on a myriad of forms and as such are sites where hybrid/identities of difference (mestizaje, indio, espanol), and multiple cultural traditions (indio, espanol and border) and linguistic differences (English, Spanish and Calo) for example conspire against dominant and monologic representations of Chicano/a community's identities and histories and knowledges.

In the last section of my literature review I explore new social movement theory in order to further contextualize my examination of these sites. Although I end with this literature review of movement theory, it really provides the larger context of my study to explore macro/micro expressions of Chicano movement where I trace relationships dialogically inward, outward and back. As I have suggested before, I see these three sites as representative micro expressions of the new Chicano/a movement both diachronically, that is in historical terms, and synchronically, as contemporary spatial manifestations in this postmodern moment.

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT LITERATURE

Situating the identity and pedagogy practices of these sites in the context of social movement theory is a central concern of this study. I examine how the values, ideologies and material practices of *el movimiento*, the Chicano civil rights movement and it contemporary manifestation in the present have influenced the cultural and educational practices/ritualized actions of these sites. This approach provides for an analysis of Chicano institutions that traces a historical continuum of practices and values that have emerged from this community's tradition of political struggle and activism.

As Holland and Lave (2001) suggest, studying "long-term transformative struggles are telling sites for the study of identities and subjectivities, or "history in person" (p.3) By focusing on these sites as crucibles of Chicano movement writ small views them sites of enduring struggles that produce historically produced activist practices of identities or agency. It provides analytical tools to examine local situated practices in order to reveal both the structuring racial, class and gender practices and individual and collective responses (history in person) to those dominant practices.

Two lines of inquiry guide this section, one will explore social movement literature that has reconsidered notions of identity and agency in order to revision social movements (Della Porta 2003, Holland and Lave, 2001). The tradition addresses social formations in terms of "social agents, their interrelations in practice, their identities, their life trajectories and their changing understanding" (Holland and Lave, 2001,; p. 7). This means focusing of "local contentious practices" like the educational practices I examine in my three sites as the grounds for understanding identity and agency. The second explores social movements over time in terms of generational micro cohorts of activism

that are reflective and refractive of new social and historical conditions and theorization and practice (Whittier, 1995).

New Social Movement Theory

Following the civil rights, anti war, environmental and women's movements of the 1960s and 1970s a new body of scholarly work emerged to address this social phenomenon that seemed to depart from earlier expressions of social conflict, principally the labor conflicts of the late 19th century and of the depression era 1930's. This was also partly a response to two characteristics of these new social movements that were different from earlier struggles; first, that the movement actors who participated were not workers per se as in earlier movements but organized around racial and ethnic, women's and/or anti war issues and secondly, that their demands differed from workers movements of the mid/late 19th century to the early 20th century. In part because existing theories of collective action failed to account for these differences between these old and new social and cultural formations, new scholarship in the post 1960s and 1970s emerged that began to address these differences based on the role of actors or based on differing social and structural conditions.

For example, Offe (1985) argued that while workers movements fought for material demands like higher wages or workplace conditions, the demands of new movements centered on ideological critiques of modernism, progress and stifling nature of bureaucracies; decentralized organizational structures and demand for autonomous spaces Della Porta (2006, p. 9). Melucci (1982, 1989, 1996) also agreed that new movements do not seek materials gains like the workers movements, and instead their demands centered on opposition to state and market intrusion into private lives and the right to self-identity (ibid, p. 9).

Two Schools of Thought

Out of this body of work emerged two schools of thought on new social movement theory. One focuses on the role of collective actors, the other on structural forces to explain social movements. The former scholarship was partly inspired by new socio cultural criticism, namely Foucault's analysis of microphysics of power and the micropolitical theory of Deleuze and Guattari who saw "power and productivity-- and this the potential for resistance-- as dispersed and as emanating from subjectivities and everyday life …" (Cote, 2007; p. 8). The latter school was inspired by the Marxist tradition and focused on examining larger macro processes and structural forces to understand these new formations. An example of this approach is Wallerstein's world systems theory (2004) that conceptualizes the global economic system in terms of core and periphery. This view traces the development of the global economy from a Fordist to Post Fordist political economy resulting in a network society and examines social relations in urban communities vs workplace relations (ibid, p. 10).

Other variations of new social movement research link micro processes of social movements to individual consciousness of its participants. Influenced by Pierre Bourdieu, they link the cultural habits of actors to structural determinants to examine political conflict. Crossley (2002) for example has advanced this model that uses "habitus, structure and agency" as analytical tools (ibid, p. 11). Foran (1997) also focuses on culturalist approach to examining social movements and revolutions by focusing on "agency and ideas, or actors and their conceptions" (p. 6). Rather than focus on structural causal factors, this approach to examining social movements looks at the importance of 'collective memories', 'symbolic politics' and 'popular political culture'.

Drawing from the insights of this research, Della Porta and Diani (2006) have proposed the development of a distinctive field of research to study new social movements that draws from both schools. Della Porta and Diani (2006) examines the structural basis of social movements focusing on the processes of globalization to understand how these mechanism give rise to social movements. In addition, they examine both the cognitive and emotional elements of collective action. Their work on the role of symbolic production to produce critical consciousness as well as understanding how these same cultural artifacts are mobilized for creating agentic individual and collective identities inform my study.

Holland and Lave (2001) also underscore the importance of cultural production and practices to "alter subjectivity" (p. 11). They suggest that through the deployment of certain cultural forms, they become the "significant media through which identities are evoked in social practices and intimate dialogue" (p. 12). For example, the educational practices seen as local contentious practices are reflective of larger macro struggles, of the Chicano movement writ large. I ask how these larger struggles are realized in these spaces, how they shape subjectivities and identities and how they are shaped in practice. I explore these larger structural forces of the Chicano movement or HIS are dialectically and dialogically linked to micro processes of cognitive formation or HIP in each site.

New Social Movements Redefined

Della Porta and Diani (2006) maintain that social movements are distinct social processes in which actors are engaged in collective action and specifically that movement participants "are involved in conflictual relations with identified opponents; are linked by dense informal networks; and share a distinct collective identity" p. (20). Examining their local cultural practices using this criteria, I examined how these sites may be read as

local contemporary expressions of the larger Chicano movement. My observations indicated how they are indeed expressions of Chicano transformative practices, although my study will more fully confirm this analysis. I present some the macro cultural practices of the Chicano movement in this section that will be compared to local practices of my three sites in an effort to trace linkages in my field work.

Conflictual Relations with Identified Opponents

The Chicano movement comprised multiple strands and struggles across regions of the southwest: anti war struggles against government intervention in Vietnam, struggles against school and university authorities over education, farmworker rights struggles against the inhumane treatment by multinational and large growers and land claim rights against the governmental usurpation of lands. Underlying these struggles was a general resistance to western European models of development and progress and manifested politically in terms of ideological critiques of mainstream and whitestream ideologies and epistemologies. Struggles over educational policies and practices focused on institutional access but also more radical demands over the dominant rationalist discourses and epistemologies that undergird most institutional policies and curricular content and pedagogical form. Today, these struggles continue in terms of the accountability policies that guide schooling practices and high stakes standardized testing that dominate classroom instruction that Apple (2004) and others have linked to larger macro forces--capitalist globalization and neoliberal political policies as a whole. I address later how local contentious practices in my three sites are expressed to counter these larger structuring forces.

Linked by Dense Informal Networks

In the 1960s and 1970s, movement actors employed dense informal networks by creating *Planes* that emerged from political gatherings of Chicano/as in Colorado and Texas and via the formation of a national network of student organizations like the national student group, MEChA. Activists on campuses also organize across the country through annual meetings convened by academic organizations established in the early 1970's (NACCS, TACHE, MALCS). Farmworker organizations organized in the 1960's and 1970's still persist today thought not as visible nationally. While many of the institutions created by early Chicano/a activism still exist, it does not represent mass movement politics as before.

Today, Chicanos use less formal networked models of organizing that characterize more modern forms of collectivizing. Activists are connected through a internet technologies that include the use list serves, social networking tools and video conferencing software that link participants across the country and are the first line of organizing much in the same way that phone banks operated during the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. One example of the power of the internet to link political activists was the EZLN led indigenous movement in the 1990s that linked Chicano activists with their Mexicano companeros (Callahan, 2008 email correspondence; Gomez, 2009 email correspondence; Castells, 2003). The ASCR in fact used similar forms of networking to establish linkages with other Chicano/a organizations as forms of educational practice shared information rapidly across regional, national and international spheres.

Share a Distinct Collective Identity/Chicanismo

The Chicano/a movement then was based on a shared collective identity defined by movement activists as *Chicanismo*. This nationalist ideological discourse served to unite regional Chicano movements and formed the basis for political and cultural mobilization. As a "effective and powerful political cultures of resistance" (Foran, 1997), *el movimiento* movement drew on formal ideologies, such as Chicanismo, on folk traditions, such as memories of past struggles between Anglo and Mexicano and indigenous and campesino struggles in Mexico, and on popular activist idioms such as social justice and giving back to one's community. Today, movement activists are linked by a shared critical ideological perspective or critical literacy and the belief that one must actualize those beliefs and literacies through active participation in struggles against oppression as Urrieta's study has shown (2009, p. 24).

Cultural Artifacts/Conceptual Practices of Macro and Micro Chicana/o Activism

Wertsch (1998) also offers important insights into the study of social movement and identity formation. His work focuses on understanding processes of interaction between mediated action and cultural artifacts or tools in order to understand identity formation. Mediated action within the Chicano movement for example are those ideological discourses that make up movement lore like Chicanismo, that expressed a form of Chicano nationalism during early movement history. Wertsch (1998) suggest that these discourses that predominate in the larger figured world of social movements become identity artifacts that are manifested locally as the language of the collective identities that are formed when they become part of these broader social movements (Della Porta and Viani, 2006). Contemporary ideological expressions of Chicanismo have been fundamentally reconceptualized early on by Marxist theory, then Chicana feminism

in the 1980's and 1990's. Today, indigenous, subaltern and postcolonial theories have further modified contemporary strains of Chicanismo as they are expressed via the cultural practices in these sites. I turn now to some of cultural practices that define macro practices as elaborated by recent scholarship. Urrieta (2009) has extended this revisioning of social movement literature in the context of the Chicano movement.

El Movimiento

Urrieta (2009) in his recently published book, *Working from Within* reconceptualizes Chicano movement analysis that more accurately reflects our current postmodern moment. He focuses on those cultural practices through which Chicana/o identity developed and is sustained using insights from Della Porta and Diani (2003) on collective identities. His book underscores the importance of collective identities in defining social movements partly formed through particular ideological discourses that make up the general lore about the Chicano movement. For most Chicanos, *el movimiento* or *la causa* is premised on 1) a revisionist perspective of history, 2) an asset of heroes, artifacts, and 3) decolonization and social justice discourse according to Urrieta (2009) that ideologically aligns movement participants.

For example, movement actors have adopted certain styles of behaviors and rituals that differentiates Chicanos from adversaries or the "Other" (dress, language, handshake, etc), key identifiers (UFW eagle, Aztec warrior), key characters of individuals (Che, Zapata, Magon, Tenayuca, Chavez, Villa), artifacts like books, visual docs, musical forms (*Un trip thru Mind Jail, Tierra, Ballad of Gregorio Cortez, Occupied America, la Frontera, corridos*); and events or places (Texas independence, the Alamo, Mexican American war, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Aztlan, Tejas, el Valle) (Urrieta, 2009). Somers (1994) points out similarly that "(t)hese elements are merged into

stories or narratives which circulate among members of a movement, reflecting their vision of the world and reinforcing solidarity" (109).

Another cultural marker less identified but just as important and in concert with this new vision of resistance and agency were the tattoos of *la Virgen* or *la crucitas* that marked barrio and colonia youth. New scholarship has unveiled how this mode of self inscription was an assertion of resistance to authority figures like the cops who regularly patrol black and brown working class neighborhoods willy nilly. And it also functioned as an identity marker for youth that identified them with a particular neighborhood. Salinas describes how as a young man growing up in La Loma, an east Austin barrio, his young companeros used tattooing as a marker of solidarity against the daily policing and intimidations by *chotas* who had already labeled them troublemakers simply because of the color of their skin (Mendoza, 2006; p. 310-13).

These symbols of the Chicano movement are bound up with Chicano collective identity, both regional and personal (Urrieta, 009). They are symbols of Chicano activism deeply familiar to activists and elicit visceral reactions for participants of these figured worlds. However, more recently some of these symbols have either come under critique or have been refashioned to reflect changing postmodern Latino culture and new Chicano movement politics. For example, symbols like Aztlan have been transformed from representing less the demand to reclaim land lost to US expansionism than a palimpsest that evokes multiple images to reflect a more postmodern vision of this key icon. Anzaldua has for example has reinscripted Aztlan to represent less a nationalist vision of the Chicano community towards one more representative of its diversity and complexity.

Importantly, Urrieta (2009) points out these micro worlds are not one-way receptacles of these larger discourses. Even where history and territorial and cultural

roots are important elements of a collective identity as is the case for Chicano movement "symbolic re elaboration is always present" (p. 108). Identity develops and is renegotiated via various processes: "conflicts over versions of reality and various forms of symbolic production, collective practices and rituals as well as political processes" (p. 113). This study in fact found that local and transnational experiences and traditions were expressed in these spaces that recreated a new Chicano/a imaginary.

The latter point underscores why analysis is situational and local as politics are always already changing. Della Porta and Diani (2006) also makes similar claims about the role of macro and micro forces in identity processes: “In constructing their own identity, individuals attribute coherence and meaning to the various phases of their own public and private history. This is often reflected in their life histories and biographies, …” (p. 96). These ideological and identity practices function as cultural artifacts and tools to create transformative and autonomous educational spaces. These micro activist figured worlds are representative of these larger macro worlds. These larger imagined communities impact these local communities in complex ways that this study hopes to uncover using social movement theory.

Social Movement Theory/Microcohorts

Whittier’s (1995) work on micro-cohorts of the feminist movement provides another lens by which to examine these sites. In her intergenerational study of the feminist movement, Whittier (1995) argues that as women entered the feminist movement at different stages they formed “micro cohorts” of feminists that expressed somewhat differing ideologies and practices based on local and personal contexts. Describing the feminist movement in terms of generational micro-cohorts of women, explains the continuity and difference between generations of feminist activists over time,

from first wave to second wave. These micro cohorts account for the continuity of the feminist movement and some of its enduring features even to the present. Micro-cohorts are defined as having distinct formative experiences: "they enter the women's movement at a specific point in history, engaged in different activities, had a characteristic political culture, and modified feminist collective identity" (p. 56). This new social movement theory provides a lens by which to examine later expressions of oppositional movement as activists assume new forms of resistance (Whittier, 1995; Della Porta and Diani, 2006).

In the same way, educators in the three sites I examined represented micro cohorts of the Chicano movement and account for Chicana/o movement's continuity and its enduring quality. While Chicano scholars have provided historical and sociological literature of the movement at its height in the late 1960s and early 1970s, little work has been done on exploring later stages of the movement. Whittier (1995) provides a way to conceptualize these sites as micro cohorts of Chicano/a movement where intergenerational activists have joined movement at different historical junctures, participate in material activities defined around collective identities built on the political culture of Chicanismo (p. 56). For example, the RSA which was founded in the early 1980s has served partly as a training ground for some participants who have moved on to other sites. This didn't necessarily explain all participant's experiences but does provide another perspective by which to examine cross fertilization of ideological discourses, identity practices and pedagogy between each site in addition to the ones that may seem more apparent on first blush.

Intergenerational Chicano/a activists can be considered to practice similar yet differing mediated action, refashion Chicano political culture and assume a collective

identity that reflects new social and political realities. This analysis of oppositional collective action as located in mediated action—action and interaction rather than necessarily focused individual self identity, attitudes and beliefs. While this perspective is important analysis must included understanding these processes at the collective level (Whittier, 1995; p.16). As educators of the Tejano *diaspora*, I focused on participants who were members of the ASCR who have gone on to work at other Chicana/o activist spaces across the country. I also examine other local micro cohorts like the RSA and the LGC as representative of this *diaspora* locally. In some cases, these educators either began at ASCR or were participants in both sites. I examine this cross-fertilization of Chicano/a activist ideologies and practices between these Chicanao/a activist educational spaces.

CONCLUSION

By utilizing a *mezcla* of critical lenses and conceptual frameworks, I illustrate the dynamic, multiple ways in which participants in three sites, the Llano Grande Center, the Advanced Seminar on Chicano/a Research and Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia Bookstore, have transformed traditional spaces of teaching and learning. These recreated spaces provide opportunities for participants to self-author, to improvise and redefine subjectivities and identities against imposed negative figurations of identities. I draw from selected literature of social practice theory of identity, critical theory, tenets of Chicana Feminist standpoint, decolonial and indigenous theory and new social movement analysis. This conceptual framework is exploratory and preliminary and provides a broad and flexible framework by which to analyze the work of LGC, ASCR and RSA.

As I have suggested before, I explore these sites as representative of micro figured worlds of Chicano activism. My findings suggest that on the basis of participant self-designations as educators, Chicano/as, and as activists, this interpretation of fieldsites help upon further study. Holland and Lave (2001) provided insights for how I might link these multiple critical strands of inquiry. They outline a process of investigation "starting with local struggles situated in specific times and places—and trace out practices of identification, the relation of these practices to broader structural forces and within that relational context, the historical production of persons and personhood" (Holland and Lave 2001, p. 9). Using Holland et al's (1998) constructs, micro and macro figured worlds will help me situate these sites dialogically by tracing their conceptual and material practices from local to global and back again.

I focused on identifying the cultural tools and artifacts that are deployed, especially those conceptual and material practices that can be linked to larger cultural and political struggles by Chicanos/as. I rely mainly on in depth personal narratives of key participants, observation of participants in these spaces as they engage in daily activities and analysis of documents gathered form each site using critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 2001) in understanding how activist identities form and coalesce in this sites and how they institutionalize these discourses as cultural tools and artifacts to counter *whitestream* narratives.

Chapter 3: Methodology

> I press for a more generous, and inclusive approach to method, as part of this briefly touch on a series of destabilizing questions about the character and role of academic inquiry, and about knowledge more generally. This is because the division of labour which founds the academy, between the good truth and such other goods as politics, aesthetics, justice, romance, the spiritual, inspirational and the personal, is in the process of becoming unraveled. This implies that we need to look not only at our practices but also at our institutions if we are to create methods that are quieter and more generous. Perhaps the model that we need, or the one of the models, is that of "partial connection" (Strathern, 1991).
>
> At any rate, if the argument works at all then we need to find ways of living in uncertainty. The guarantees, the gold standards, proposed for and by methods, will no longer suffice. We need to find ways of elaborating quiet methods, slow methods, or modest methods. In particular, we need to discover ways of making methods without accompanying imperialisms (Law, 2004)

INTRODUCTION

This study traced the life history trajectories of participants in three educational spaces, the Llano Grande Center (LGC), Red Salmon Arts (RSA) and the Advanced Seminar for Chicana/o Research (ASCR) who are employing local, hybrid research methodologies and emergent theories of educational practices to empower local Chicano/a communities. I captured their *testimonios* via a case study approach that documents their resistive practices in terms of the transformative educational, epistemological and identity practices they use. This study was especially focused on

participant's activist identity development within the context of the Chicana/o movement as it is theorized and practiced locally in these three sites. I extend new research that has begun to explore how educators enact transformative pedagogy in Chicana/o educational contexts (Urrieta, 2003) by focusing on Texas educators who are creating transformative educational spaces using local and autonomous teaching and learning practices.

These educational sites evoke the kind of *hybrid* (Bhabha, 2004), *borderlands* (Anzaldua, 1987), *anomalous* (Ellsworth, 2005), and *third spaces of enunciation* (Mignolo 2000)[3] that use local and autochthonous forms of transformative pedagogy to create activist and alternative identities, what I call the "Tejano/Chicano activist educated person" (Levinson, Foley and Holland, 1996). These alternative spaces are educational sites where participants are actively engaged in the creation of new, critical and distinctly culturally-based communities of practice and collective identities "where subjectivities form and agency develops" (p. 14). As a theoretical construct, cultural production gets at the root of how individuals and collectives confront their ideological and material conditions not only in educational spaces but outside institutions of schooling.

In these educational spaces, activist scholars bridge formal and informal learning contexts and local theories, epistemologies and identity practices in new, critically transformative ways. The LGC works with students of a local high school, Edcouch-Elsa High School and creates academic and community leaders through their student and

[3] In her book *Places of Learning*, Elizabeth Ellsworth locates and describes various learning environments that are found outside the traditional classroom setting, in places that she says are "far from schools as centers of learning" (5). She calls these alternative curricular spaces "anomalous places of learning" where relations between the self and the social political body are created and where critical, transformative learning occurs (Ellsworth, 131). Moreover, these sites create learning spaces where teachers and students and community work collaboratively to contest dominating discourses, including traditional pedagogical theories and practices "so that those who have not participated in his history—in making the knowledges already arrived at—may participate in making its future" (Ellsworth, 165). *Hybrid*, *borderlands* and *third spaces* all evoke similar constructions of educational spaces that Ellsworth describes here.

community-focused research center. The RSA/Resistencia provides a space where university student and faculty collaborate with community activists and artists to empower youth and local communities of color. Similarly, the participants in the ASCR worked to create community based, collaborative communities of practice where graduate students could effectively bridge their academic, and community and pedagogical work. Although ASCR members have dispersed to other locales, they continue their work in these communities still linked by political networks facilitated in many cases via web-based social network technologies.

Participants/consultants[4] in these spaces defined themselves as Chicana and Chicano activist educators[5]. I explored how educators in these spaces who self-define as Chicano/a activists and the pedagogical practices they employ are yielding power for participants (Guajardo et al, 2008). I contextualize their political and cultural work by situating them with in the larger Chicano/a movement, then and now. That is, from the 1960's and 1970's whence it first emerged as *el movimiento,* to the present as local expressions of Chicana/o movement politics linked via various webs and networks. As such, these participants in these sites may be read as "micro-cohorts" (Whittier, 1995) of the Chicana/o movement as they have employed movement politics and pedagogies that evolved over time and place situated in new socio political contexts. I attempted to show

[4] I use these terms interchangeably to underscore the more active role that participant's play in my study. As consultants rather than merely participants in my study, I strive to incorporate them at multiple levels in order to more fully articulate and give voice to their stories and to make this a more collaborative research study.

[5] To self define as a "Chicana" or "Chicano" means to identify oneself as part of a collective political movement that has endured over time and place. As a common self-definition or collective identity, Chicana/o derives from shared a common set of "interests, experiences and solidarity" (Whittier 1995, p. 15). Moreover, identifying oneself as Chicana/o links individuals via "interpretative frameworks, and a political consciousness through which members understand their world" (p. 15). Importantly, Whittier also underscores the fact that collective identities are not static and change through struggle and debate, a process that this study will examine in these sites.

how identity formation within these sites, read as forms of social practice and cultural production, constitute and respond to these new social movement discourses and structures. Whittier and other new social movement theorists offer a more nuanced and complex perspective that explores the relationships "between collective identities, political opportunities and culture" (Meyer, Whittier and Robnett, 2002). Coupled with my micro-analysis of sites, this critical sociological analysis provides a macro perspective often missing in studies of educational practices.

In addition to a diachronic reading of fieldsites as representing generational micro-cohorts of the Chicano/a movement (Whittier 1995), I also examined synchronically how these sites might be read as "experimental spaces" (Seed, as cited in Villenas, 2004) where shared alternative forms of cultural practice emerge based on contemporary and shared contexts and realities. By putting consultant's stories from each site in dialogue with each other around common epistemological, pedagogic, ethical and political concerns (Beverley, 2004; p. 22), I also added another level of contextualization to this study that situates them synchronically to trace possible cross-fertilization of their material and discursive practices comparatively. Diachronic approaches capture and describe phases of development of a field site. Synchronic approaches focus on particular sectors tied to themes or patterns to explore how something works, whether a particular pedagogical practice or policy (Weiss, 1995; p. 42-45). I employed both synchronic and diachronic approaches by first tracing historical antecedents then close nuanced analysis of particular sectors of these sites, namely their identity and educational practices and their relationships.

The questions I posed to consultants elucidated some burning issues of the day particularly salient now as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of

Chicano Studies departments and programs. This idea suggests that participants in these sites are also engaged in projects and debates within the field of Chicana/o studies that call in question its theories and practices in this postmodern age. In addition to social movement theory, I employed tenets of Chicana feminist standpoint theory, social cultural identity theory, critical theory and pedagogy and epistemological analysis. Linking these critical approaches provides for a more nuanced and complex examination of the various ways that these educators engage in political and social struggles over place and space, identity practices and ways of knowing and being that articulate racial and gender meanings and power in educational contexts.

This dissertation explored the relationships between activist identities, new social movements and alternative educational spaces, focusing on the work of Red Salmon Arts (RSA), the Llano Grande Center (LGC) and the Advanced Seminar on Chicana/o Research (ASCR). I explored these relationships in terms of the following research questions:

1) What is the meaning of "organic intellectual" in the context of the contemporary Chicana/o movement, as represented in educational spaces?

2) What do participants' personal stories tell us about the evolution and transformation of the Chicano/a movement?

3) What do participant's theories and practices of pedagogy reveal about the nature of their social engagement and the formation of their activist identities?

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Via the *testimonios*, personal narratives and other cultural artifacts that I collected and analyzed, this study focused on tracing the trajectories of these educator activist identities over time and place. As academics who are enacting forms of critical pedagogy, their narratives illuminated tensions that these educators face as they attempt to negotiate oppressive schooling institutions while at the same time try to recreate alternative autonomous educational spaces. More specifically, I explored the relationships between micro processes of formation of activist identities within these sites focusing on how ideological practices inform pedagogy and enact critical subjectivities. At the same time, I coupled this analysis of local practices with a macro view by using new social movement theory to add more global perspective and capture larger regional and global forces that impact these spaces. A particular contextual focus explored their educational work in terms of Chicana/o movement theories and practices. By focusing on alternative, critical educational spaces, this study attempted to answer the call by critical activist scholars for the mapping of spaces, in this case educational, that documents alternative, transformative and autonomous practices, in this case pedagogical and identity based (Pile and Keith, 1993). This comparative study also provided for a broadened interpretative perspective that is "local and ethnographic, yet moves beyond the school to examine links between local and cultural practices and the community, the region, the state and the economy" (p. 2).

I believe that this study has yielded new understandings of the experiences of students in alternative teaching and learning spaces. As the numbers of Chicana/o and Latino students increase, educators need to be poised to address these growing numbers especially if almost half are dropping out and many end up in criminal justice systems. The school to prison pipeline needs to be redirected to colleges in order to ensure the

welfare of our Latina/o communities. This study of alternative and activist spaces that are enacting transformative educational practices is also especially relevant because of the need to document stories of success as Villenas and Foley (2002) call for in their study of successful educational projects using the new qualitative criterion that they and others (Valenzuela, 1999) employ. Finally, I situated my work in research approaches that use multiple lenses that our current postmodern moment demands. Many scholars argue that we need new, more innovative approaches that provide more complex and nuanced studies of social phenomenon in our postmodern age (Sandoval, 2000; Harvey, 1989; Jameson, 1991; Castells, 2004; Mignolo, 2000; Urrieta, 2009).

Another reason to undertake this study is to focus on Texas-specific educational contexts and practices. While new research has begun to explore how educators employ transformative pedagogy in Chicana/o educational contexts, most of these studies have been focused in California (Urrieta, 2004). Until recently, Latino-based studies of this type have not focused on the work of Texas educators who are creating transformative educational spaces using local and autonomous teaching and learning practices. My study's findings I believe have helped to fill that lacuna.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

My reinterpretation of Chicano identity and activism in educational contexts was grounded in a methodological framework that bridges local and indigenous epistemologies--namely Chicana/o, and feminist and European epistemologies that trace their political and philosophical lineage to certain critical theories and practices (Smith 1999; Anzaldua, 1989). Standpoint theory privileges marginalized perspectives and

understandings (Harding, 2004; Haraway, 2004; Delgado-Bernal, 1998). These research traditions are "grounded and emergent and publicly engaged" anthropology that seeks social justice and equity (Lassiter, 2005) and highlights the belief that research is a significant site of struggle between competing epistemologies: western European and the "Other" as Smith (1999) argues; this is the main ideological process by which marginalized peoples have been historically coded into western systems of knowledge in order to colonize and discipline indigenous peoples into submission (p. 39).

I employed these critical, interpretative qualitative methods strategically not only to understand the relationships between participants and the educational institutions but also with the intent to help change these spaces in critically informed ways. These methods inform a research design that is founded on principles that foreground social justice in education. They impact my choice of sites, interest in resistive theories and practices, a more collaborative approach to research, my level of involvement with their work and studies that allow for the capturing of consultant voices.

Anzaldua (1990) calls for theorizing new research methodologies: "Necesitamos teorías that will rewrite history using race, class, gender and ethnicity as categories of analysis, theories that cross borders, that blur boundaries – new kinds of theories with new theorizing methods" (p. 25). Indeed, as Anzaldua and other feminist and indigenous scholars contend, we need research grounded in the standpoint of previously marginalized communities. Together, these interdisciplinary approaches are more respectful, ethical and sympathetic of local communities. Fine (2006) suggests that these forms of research are based on an ethics of inclusion that disrupts and interrupts dominance. These forms of "contesting research" foreground subaltern and marginalized voices and posit "the understanding that people – especially those who have experienced

historic oppression - hold deep knowledge about their lives and experiences, and should help shape the questions, [and] frame the interpretations' of research (Torres and Fine, 2006; p. 458). Such research practices produces knowledge from the ground up based on local, situated autochthonous theories and epistemologies and cultural practices.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The following section will discuss the methods I employed in my study (narrative inquiry, case study, document collection and participant observation) and how they informed and facilitated exploration of my study's research questions.

Narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry focuses on the daily, lived experiences of individuals in order to understand a phenomenon or experience (Kramp, 2004). Narrative inquiry uses personal narratives and life histories as a unit of analysis and my study will focus on the interview narratives and documents that I collected from consultants. Their personal narratives and life histories situated their individual experiences at the center of my ethnographic inquiry (Lassiter, 2005). Because these personal narratives document people's personal and subjective experiences, the object of narrative inquiry is understanding, rather than explanation, as positivist research approaches seek as their outcome (p. 104). Moreover, as suggested by scholars like Wertsch (1995), narrative inquiry provides for further exploration and understanding regarding narrativity and human consciousness. Building on the works of Bruner (1996), Wertsch (1995) argues for understanding narrative as a

"paradigmatic" mode of thought (p. 80) that disrupts other forms of understanding and knowledge production and can also open up avenues for new pedagogical practices.

As alternative forms of historiography, these personal narratives function as important snippets of life histories that complement the more traditional and "official" histories we get from textbooks and other historical documents to provide us with more complete and diverse accounts of our world. Thus, as a form of alternative documentation, they help me get to the root of my consultants lived experiences, how they have made meaning of significant events in their lives, and how particular events and experiences may perhaps have changed their perception of their world and of themselves.

Many of the consultants in these sites acknowledge the power of personal narratives and stories and how these cultural traditions and practices impacted their political and educational work. Many of these contemporary practices are based in Mexicana/o and Chicana/o folk culture that have used stories as a way to share knowledge, beliefs and values from generation to generation. These cultural narratives functioned as cultural artifacts that bound this imagined community (Anderson, 1983) into one with shared values, memories and histories that also defined them as a people with a shared, collective identity. I focused especially on those political and pedagogical ideological and material practices that have shaped their subjectivities and perspectives. This approach that provides for examination of everyday practice allows us to rethink the "character of resistance" and "as practices of the political not traditionally conceived" that are outside the realm of traditional notions of resistive (Hartman, 2005). I employed this ethnographic genre because it is the privileged form of method and discourse used by

feminist and postmodern anthropology that strives for more dialogic and collaborative research studies (Lassiter, 2005).

Testimonio

I want to also suggest that the interview narratives I collected be considered as *testimonios,* an ethnographic genre that provides access to discourses and rhetoric of subaltern communities. Unlike conventional or canonical ethnographic discourse, local indigenous *testimonios* considers marginalized or subaltern people as legitimate agents and their stories as valid accounts of social and historical processes. *Testimonios* frequently emerge from experiences of social conflict and struggle (Beverly, 1993) and have recently been used by Chicana feministas who strategically employ them to create spaces of collective association and critique outside the academic institutions (Latina Feminist Collective, 2002).

Testimonios function like the counterstories in CRT methodology. They also deconstruct monologic literary and ethnographic conventions (Beverley, 1993; p. 68). Formally, they are subaltern *counter*narratives to modernist forms of storytelling; they foreground narratives of cultural, racial, gendered and queer identities, both individual and collective. Even if individual however, *testimonios* situate their personal stories in the context of their communities. Thus, the stories of consultants that I collected and analyzed constitute valid representations of larger social and cultural realities as practiced in their educational and political work.

Case study

Case study methods provide for in depth study of sites and informants using interviews to gain access to experiential knowledge, a form of qualitative knowledge (Stake, 2005). Collective, multi-sited case study provides for phenomenological investigation of multiple cases and consultants (Stake, 2005; Cresswell, 1998). This method provides for analysis of the educational activities and practices of the three sites I examined in a variety of contexts; social, historical, geographic and cultural. It provided for both diachronic and synchronic analysis.

Case study also provides for a detailed description of each site at multiple levels of contextualization of each site to ground my cases in their local sociohistorical and cultural conditions and traditions. As a multi-sited case study, I compared practices of these "experimental spaces" by conducting an embedded analysis of activities, discourses and consultants as they relate to educational and identity practices and to each site. My analysis of key themes that emerged in my study will be compared across cases and triangulated with other forms of documentation that I list below and member checking with key consultants. Cross case analysis of each site will help me identity shared emergent themes as well as uniqueness of each site (Cresswell, 1998).

Case study also allowed for collecting and analyzing multiple sources of data including site documents: websites and pedagogical and curricular materials, theoretical literature and consultants essays, archival records, email correspondence, personal observations from fieldnotes and memos and other virtual physical artifacts (Yin, 1989*).* Case study provided a method to explore how participants enact activist identity and educational practices in these sites in the context of the Chicana/o movement.

Participant Observation

My long-term participation and observation in these sites has allowed me to reflect on subtle patterns and underlying tensions and helped me overcome shortcomings that many researchers encounter when they first enter the field. This long term relationship has allowed me to "get close" fast and immerse myself in these worlds. Emerson (1995) speaks of this form of relationship with fieldsites as "deep immersion" that creates a "sense of place that enables ethnographers to inscribe the detailed, context-sensitive, and locally informed fieldnotes and allows for more "thick description" (p. 2). This "deep immersion" is important in order to grasp experiences, events and phenomenon that are meaningful and important to participants (p. 2).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) underscore the collaborative process of observation that long-term relationships helps develop. This collaboration suggests the kind of mutual interaction and *confianza* (Stanton-Salazar, 2001) with consultants that long-term relationships affords. My role as native ethnographer provided me with special insights into each of my sites and helped me focus on themes to address in my fieldnotes where attention has been paid to negotiation of identity and commitment to Chicana activist worldviews when looking at educational practices as activist (Urrieta, 2007; p. 122).

The notion of fieldwork as detached, passive observation has been discredited by feminist and postmodern ethnography that values active participation in day to day affairs. I have immersed myself in order to document closely the processes of learning and socialization as they occur and "to experience events and meanings in ways that approximate members' experiences" (Emerson 1995; p. 2). This approach jibes with the goals of feminist and postmodern ethnographies that attempt to get at indigenous

meanings in order to mitigate research mediation by letting consultants speak in their own voices (pp. 12-13).

DATA COLLECTION

This section includes a discussion of my research site descriptions, participant selection process, interview process and protocol, and finally, documentation collected from my participation and observations at each site.

Research Sites

i) Red Salmon Arts (RSA)

"Poetry is healing, empowering and liberating" (raulsalinas interview Nov. 2008)

I focused on five key consultants at RSA: raul salinas, Rene Valdez, Lilia Rosas, Louis Mendoza and Alan Gomez. Raul Salinas is regarded as a central figure in *el movimiento*, a Chicano intellectual who emerged from the prison rebellion movement to become one of the most important Chicano poets and human rights activists today. His story of transformation from East Austin street hood and prisoner in some of the most brutal prisons in the country to political activist and educator will be examined in this study.

After emerging from prisons, Salinas returned to that same East Austin neighborhood in 1981 to found Red Salmon Arts (RSA), a grassroots Native American/Chican@ based cultural arts organization that produces cultural arts

programming for Latino, Black and indigenous working class communities. RSA includes both Resistencia Bookstore and a small independent publishing arm, Red Salmon Press. As exemplar of Chicana/o activist figured worlds, the bookstore functions as spiritual, educational and political space where particular ideological and identity practices predominate that form communities of practice using various cultural art forms, namely poetry (Urrieta, 2009; Holland et al, 1998). The independent press publishes many of the featured artists who read at the bookstore and the youth who Raul Salinas has taught over the past 25 years.

Salinas would found over the years a number of projects with the support of local activists and UT graduate and under graduate students, four of whom make up my key consultants in this study. The most visible projects are Café Libro, a twice-monthly open mike featuring established and novice writers and the Save Our Youth (SOY) poetry workshops. Over the past seventeen years, raul and these community and student activists led poetry workshops for youth, in east Austin schools and in juvenile detention centers. Because of his experience in criminal justice system, raul was able to identity with incarcerated youth and helps guide them to begin the process of personal transformation in much the same way that he transformed his life while in prison.

My study is significant because it begins to document the work of raul salinas and four other key consultants who have contributed to his project for further research, especially the work he did with SOY. His work with youth demonstrates how cultural arts can be used to effect positive change in youth and perhaps be used as a model for replication in other Chican@ and working class communities. As alternative autonomous educational spaces, Resistencia bookstore and the SOY poetry workshops empower youth to develop strong cultural, racial and academic identities (Fisher 2003, 2005,

2006). My documentation of Salinas' work via his life history is also significant here for it highlights an important submovement of *pinto* activistas who had a significant impact on the Chicano movement and still do to this day. This study has extended the recent work of Chicano scholars like Louis Mendoza (2006) and Alan Gomez (2006, 2007) who began tracing these important linkages in the past few years.

ii) Llano Grande Center (LGC)

> Storytelling is the way we place ourselves in the middle to the text, as we engage as reflective practitioners (Guajardo, M. and F., 2008)

The Llano Grande Research Center (LGC), based in Edcouch Elsa High School and surrounding Rio Grande valley communities was founded by Miguel and Francisco Guajardo whose stories will form the basis of my study along with three other consultants at the LGC: Cristina Salinas, a PhD history student and LGC board member, Delia Perez LGC graduate and now director of the LGC, Olga Cardoso, LGC Youth Director and Juan Ozona, who directs the Digital Storytelling Project at the LGC. The Delta region of the Lower Rio Grande valley, where the LGC is based is a predominantly working class Mexicana/o and Chicana/o region of South Texas. I began with in-depth interviews of consultants at the LGC to document their stories of the past ten years at least since the founding of the LGC. Their *testimonios*, stories and their responses to this geographic and cultural marginalization will be coupled with their personal histories and with other documents and other textual and visual artifacts I collected.

Recent historical accounts describe this deep south Texas borderlands region that straddles, culturally, socially and politically, the US and Mexico as marginalized

historically and geographically, at least since the early 19th century after the US Mexican conflicts that culminated in the US and Mexican war. Since that time, it has existed as socio-economic peripheral zone to Texas and the US historically and has defined this region's cultural and political development. This marginalization still continues to the present. Even today, this four county region that defines the Texas valley or *el valle* as it has been commonly known still is amongst the poorest region in the US. Educational systems in the valley reflect this socio economic, cultural and political marginalization.

At Edcouch-Elsa High School, students have had to contend historically with inferior schools and as a result fare poorly in comparison to their wealthier Anglo peers locally and across the state in more prosperous and white communities. In tandem with these structural inequalities, we find educational discourses, both legislative polices and mainstream media, that are typically class and race inflected, that position valley students as "low performing", "at risk", or via some other deficit model discourse. In the past decade, educational legislation has accelerated new educational policies that have accelerated accountability and high stakes standardized testing that has resulted in maintenance of their marginalized status. These traditional forms of learning, curriculum and teaching practices that rely on memorization, following rules and teaching to the TEKS and TAKS standardized tests create a "culture of measurement" according to some scholars (Guajardo, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999).

My analysis of their personal narratives has captured how activist educators in the LGC have used local forms of pedagogy--Chicano and place-based (Greunewald, 2003) as they describe it--to counter these educational practices that reflect and refract these social economic and political to produce active student participants and co-constructors of their teaching and learning. My study of this site is also representative of a Chicana/o

activist figured world (Urrieta, 2009; Holland et al, 1998). As such, I examined other pedagogical tools and artifacts that make up the LGC figured world including innovative classroom practices, culturally relevant curriculum, multi-media literacies, and collaborative teacher/student and ethnographic research projects.

iii) Advanced Seminar on Chicano Research (ASCR)

The Advanced Seminar in Chicano research (ACSR) began in 1996 as the Advanced Seminar in Postcolonial Borderlands (APSB), the latter title underscoring its postcolonial and borderlands analytic focus. Selected participants from the ASCR, all founders, will be consulted; Manolo Callahan, Cristina Salinas, Veronica Martínez-Matsuda, Lilia Rosas and Alan Gomez. Some of these consultants have moved on to teach at other universities and founded similar communities of practice.

When it was founded in the mid 1990s, the APSB, as it was initially conceived, was comprised of as a disciplinary cross-section of Chicana/o graduate students who had become politically disenchanted and alienated within their respective departments. They sought more critical and community engaged forms of academic research and pedagogical practices that were absent in their academic work. As one of its founding members put it, "the ASPB developed as a political space for graduate students and undergraduate students to investigate innovations in theory including those associated with feminism, subaltern studies, postcolonial studies and borderlands" that were not being fully explored in their respective disciplines (M. Callahan, personal correspondence, 10/8/02). APSB, then reconstituted later as the ASCR sought a more inter and multidisciplinary approach to examining the intersection of academic and

teaching practices and community concerns as well as collective support and recognition absent in their departments.

Along with narrative data collected from my in depth interviews with consultants, I have also collected ASCR documents, particularly theoretical and political documents upon which the ASCR was founded and notes from my observations as participant. My findings demonstrate that ASCR pedagogical practices, cultural tools and identity practices are partly informed by Chicana/o movement discourses and practices informed by transnational theories and practices. For example, ASCR employed *coyunturas* and *cyberculture* borrowed from the Zapatista movement in Mexico to create "emergent knowledge communities" in Austin in the mid 1990s. Similarly formed communities have since emerged elsewhere in other university and community settings as ASCR participants have since moved on to form other educational spaces. Similar to the work of participants at the RSA and the LGC above, the ASCR has sought to counter traditional forms of pedagogies and create alternative forms that incorporated local, place-based, autochthonous theories, epistemologies, and ethics.

Selection of Research Participants /Consultants

Fifteen Chicana/o educators from the LGC, ASCR and RSA were interviewed for my research study. These consultants were selected based on members who self identified as Chicana/o in their work and practice and based on their identification as activist educators. Some of these consultants have worked in more than one site so they lent special insight on the similarities and differences of various practices across fieldsites. Consultants all strongly identified with their Chicana/o and/or Mexicana/o culture. I further narrowed participants based on the following criteria drawn from studies

by Stanton-Salazar (1997, 2001), Sfard and Prusak (2005) and Whittier (1995): I chose participants that are *significant narrators* (Sfard and Prusak, 2005), *institutional agents* (Stanton-Salazar, 1997, 2001), and *movement veterana/os* (Whittier, 1995). Institutional agents (Stanton Salazar, 1997, 2001) and significant narrators (Sfard and Prusak, 2005) are the main purveyors and creators of new activist hybrid, third spaces or micro activist figured worlds by facilitating the larger movement's discourses and practices in their respective local sites, and they put into "practice or may form part of institutions or other organizations where these veterans can continue their activist work" (Urrieta, 2009; p. 173).

As institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar, 2001), these educators help site participants "construct egocentric networks characterized by trusting relations (*confianza*) and authentic social and/or institutional support (ie social capital)" (p. 22). They are also what Whittier (1995) calls movement veterana/os who "take their perspectives and practices with them and raise the consciousness of other people working on similar causes and struggles" (p. 24). Ladson Billings (2008) refers to identities and subjectivities of critical educators as the "constructors of ethical epistemologies" that mobilize "scholarship that will take a stance on behalf of human liberation" (p. 63). These "outside-the-academy" identities are formed " 'at home' on the street corners, barrios, churches, mosques, kitchens, porches, and stoops of people and communities so that our work more accurately reflects their concerns and interests" (p. 80). As institutional agents, significant narrators and movement veteranos who have accrued a certain social and cultural capital, these educators are able to mediate between community and educational institutions to effect tangible social change to benefit their communities.

The following are my consultants/participants and associated sites that met these criteria. As I indicated earlier, some consultants are cross-listed with two sites to reflect their participation across fieldsites: Cristina Salinas, Lilia Rosas and Alan Gomez who provided special insights regarding shared pedagogical approaches and similar processes of identity formations across fieldsites. Consultants were provided with a consent form that indicated that they have agreed for me to use their names.

Interviews

I first conducted qualitative interviews with participant/consultants in order to draw out their personal experiences. My initial pilot interviews were based on interview questions delineated below. These interviews however were also be exploratory and will test my initial set of questions that form the substantive frame of my study. These initial interviews helped me modify and frame my interview guide and will also generate later themes to be covered (Weiss, 1995). Although the interview questions lend some structure, I also aimed for a more open or narrative style interview that was more conversational and flow naturally with other questions that emerged during our conversations. At this stage, I began to gain insight into the processes or mechanisms that explained their identity and pedagogical practices.

Some of my first interviews were followed with shorter second interviews that extended and clarified previously identified themes linked to my research questions as well as any new themes that emerged from initial consultant discussions. I elicited both cognitive and emotional sources of respondents' reactions to specific themes that emerged in the first more open interview. This collection of interview transcripts from these sets of interviews constituted the stories, personal narratives and *testimonios* of my

consultants and later formed the basis of my data collection along with analysis of the site documents I collected.

The following were guiding questions that focused on initial themes that emerged in my review of the literature: activist identities, new social movements and alternative educational spaces. I sought to explore relationships between these themes in terms of the following interview questions:

How does your identity as Chican@ educator activist relate to your racial/ethnic/cultural/gendered/political background?

Can you describe your most important instructional, teaching and pedagogical practice(s)?

How does the political and educational work you do respond to the Chicano/a movement? How would you say it is the same and how does it differ from earlier movement engagement with education activism? Do you think this work perhaps represents a new generations of activism and new understandings of Chicana/o identity, community and educational engagement?

How would you describe your participation in the evolution and transformation of the Chicano/a movement? Why is educational activism particularly important for Chicano/a communities?

How do your pedagogical practices reflect your social engagement and the formation of your Chicana/o activist identity? How would you define "organic intellectual" in the context of the contemporary Chicana/o movement, as represented in your educational sites/ spaces?

Site specific questions:

RSA: How does the use of *poetry* underscore your understanding of the role of culture in education?

LGC: How does the use of *storytelling* underscore your understanding of the role of culture in education?

ASCR: How does the use of *encuentros*/*coyunturas*/*cyberculture* (34) underscore your understanding of the role of culture in education?

Consultants were contacted in the late fall 2009 and early Spring 2010 to arrange for interviews that began in Spring 2010 and continued into early Summer 2010. Some follow up interviews were conducted in mid summer of 2010.

I earlier gathered RSA participant narratives that were used for a short documentary film project I produced on Raul Salinas and from a larger film project directed by Laura Varela where I worked as film archivist. Interviews conducted with Salinas during this film project formed the basis of an interpretative biography in my study since he passed away prior to the completion of my study. Other consultants live in the Austin area so access was not an issue. For consultants who moved on to other communities, I relied on video conferencing and social networking tools including Skype and Facebook to conduct interviews and stay connected.

Observant Participation

As I suggested above, my past role as active participant at each site defined my observations that I conducted at each site principally in the Spring 2010. However, as I suggested, due to my more active participant at Resistencia beginning in 1990, I had already collected interviews, documents and personal reflections and fieldnotes that I had

maintained over time. I also began collecting documents from my participation with the ASCR in the late 1990's into the early 2000's and through follow up correspondence with some of its more active participants. Since the mid 1990's, I have also been in contact with LGC participants, Miguel Guajardo, Cristina Salinas and David Rice who was not interviewed in my study. Additional site observations included visits to the LGC that were conducted in early Summer 2010. I focused on emerging themes and issues gathered from existing documents gathered at each field site and from interviews. Identity and ideological and pedagogical practices and their relationship to new Chicana/o social movement artifacts and practices was a focus of my fieldnote gathering, memoing and analysis of documents collected from each fieldsite.

Fieldnotes included notes collected via personal journals as a participant with two of the field sites, RSA and ASCR. This grounded theory approach builds on previous insights that come from long-term involvement with key participants at both sites. Field notes were also collected form the LGC over the years in meetings with LGC participants named above and during my visits to the LGC. I also collected additional data as a participants with the Community Learning Exchange, a national project that extend the work of the LGC beyond this south Texas community. These field notes comprised part of my data collection that was triangulated with my interview transcripts and other documents, archival records and artifacts. I used my field notes to generate and create theory about my sites in the manner that Emerson (1995) has proposed (p. 167).

Documentation

In addition to the interview transcripts that formed the bulk of my documentation, I also collected from some of my consultants formal and informal writings; formal writing samples included scholarly work such as published essays and other theoretical literature, vita and syllabus, and informal writing samples included personal writings such as journal entries, poetry or professional personal statements. I also collected transcripts from video film projects used for documentary film projects of selected participants. Finally, I've collected other textual artifacts including email correspondences, meeting notes, pedagogical materials and artifacts collected from websites.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis consisted of inductive analysis (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and critical narrative inquiry that included both critical narrative analysis (CNA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) that provided for more in depth analysis of narrative data (Madison 1993, 2005; Banks-Wallace, 2002; Pamphilon 1991; Gee, 1996; Kramp, 2004; Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). These approaches allow for both macro analysis of larger socio-historical and political contexts and micro analysis of personal narratives focusing on thematic and functional analysis and relationships between these global and local perspectives.

Inductive analysis provides a more complex understanding of the interaction of "mutually shaping influences" to explicate the interacting realities and experiences of researcher and participant (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 40). CDA is a data analytic

approach that examines how discourses structure power relations. Analysis is focused on the power of texts to promote particular discourses and ideologies (Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001) by privileging certain views of participant roles and their practices. CNA privileges the power of personal narratives and stories to ground qualitative research (Banks Wallace 2002).

I also used visual representations to identify thematic relationships across narratives using CMAP tools software program. CMAP tools is a knowledge modeling kit that provides users with the ability to construct, share and critique knowledge models represented as concept maps or graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge (http://cmap.ihmc.us/conceptmap.html). These visual tools helped me draw thematic links between transformative and autonomous theories and pedagogies, educational spaces and consultant identities.

All site documents were also be subjected to CDA, CNA and narrative and storied analysis to identify recurring themes, ideological effects identified as Chicana/o activism (Kramp, 2004; Fairclough, 2003; p. 9). Observation notes of everyday interactions and between educators and students, community members and other site participants were compared with personal narrative data. CDA and CNA were used interchangeably to analyze personal narratives and essays, theoretical literature, email correspondence, websites, field notes and any documents that I collect from each field site. Additionally, secondary literature that includes both written and filmic narratives of sites and participants will be used to triangulate and validate thematic analysis and relationship. CNA privileges qualitative research rooted in oral traditions of African American and Latina/o communities and as such will help me identify and understand how certain

traditions and stories rooted in Chicano movement theories and practices inform participant narratives and *testimonios*.

Critical Narrative Analysis

CNA links life histories and personal narratives with larger global contexts to identify "collective meanings as they relate to individual experiences" (p. 393). For example, Banks-Wallace (2002) situates stories as units of her research analysis using African American oral traditions as contextual and historical influences on the storytelling process of her participants. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and LatCrit theory also informed my data analysis and as such highlighted the importance of personal narratives to capture experiential data and to construct counter stories that were constructed via interviews, field notes and other site documents (Solorzano and Bernal, 2001; Solorzano and Yosso, 2002; Delgado, 2001; Ladson Billings, 2006; Parker and Stovall 2004). CRT scholars argue that stories and narratives from the standpoint of minorities and working class communities are privileged forms of knowledge construction.

These forms of analysis use micro-analysis of personal narratives to illuminates key themes and narrative that can be traced to larger macro discourses. For example, recurring themes in consultant narratives that underscore ideological theories and practices related to Chicana/o movement helped me locate key formative processes of identity development. Interview responses that I collected as part of consultant narratives and histories were categorized according to the broad themes based on these salient ideological knowledge practices, activist ideologies and identity negotiations in each site.

The personal and collective stories I collected from my interview transcripts, field notes, site documents and secondary literature represent standpoint perspectives of local situated sites for Chicano knowledge production, activities, discourses and practices of identity. As such, they represent a key unit of analysis in these models that demand documentation for the insights they reveal on successful educational spaces. These models rely on context, a unit of analysis and/or focus question respectively that I elaborate more fully below.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) provided for exploration of relationships between discursive structures and power. That is, CDA focuses on how dominance is symbolically reproduced, naturalized and institutionalized through discursive practices, as in the case of my study through institutions of schooling. One particular focus of that analysis involves understanding how discursive structures distribute power at its point of production and reproduction. As Van Djik (1993) puts it, how "elites … control occasion, time place and the presence or absence of participants…. In other words, one way of enacting power is to control context" (p. 303). While I examined these themes, my focus was especially on the nature of the counter practices to these dominant modes to understand how they are "contested by various modes of challenge, that is, counterpower" (p. 302) in these sites and by these educators.

For example, my preliminary findings had identified some of these counter practices that formed units of analysis for my descriptive chapter and tied to my questions that guided this study, that is the cultural and pedagogical tools that are used in these spaces to enact activist identities and Tejano/a Chicana/o activist identities. For example,

my unit of analysis at the RSA was poetry as cultural genre or tool and my focus question is: How does poetry function as cultural genre or tool for effecting Chicano identity formation? My unit of analysis for the LGC was story and storytelling as a cultural tool and artifact and my focus questions is: How does story and storytelling function as cultural genre or tool for effecting Chicano identity formation? My unit of analysis for the ASCR was *coyunturas* as cultural tool and artifact and my focus question is: How do *coyuntura*s function as cultural genre or tool for effecting Chicano identity formation? An example of a unit of analysis that is synchronic and cuts across all three sites focused on the personal stories of participant involvement in social movement politics and their work as educators in these sites as presenting micro-cohorts of Chicana/o movement political and educational work. I also focused on recurring themes that do not conform with conventional thematics, that is, emergent themes that may be unique to the postmodern experience of Chicanisma/o.

Memos

My personal observations included memos that served as more in-depth follow-ups to the in-field notes. Memo writing fulfills the role of deeper analysis (Emerson 1995). My memo writing was based on my field notes but took my analysis one step further by connecting theoretical concepts, personal reflections and lingering questions. These memos included textual citations that applied concepts or theories onto observational notes and were shared in some cases with my consultants for review and triangulation of data. Memos were collected in a personal journal throughout the research study that strove to capture and reflect on my study as I proceeded through the all phases of data collection and analysis. Themes that center on identity and pedagogical practices

and their relation to *el movimiento* and contemporary Chicana/o movement and new social movement theories and practices were a focus of my memoing and help to generate new themes that emerged in my study.

Member Checking

Fieldnotes and documents were compared with themes to identify commonalities that reflect collective group memories within and across sites. I was in regular communication with some of my participant/consultants who served as external reviewers of my findings during later phases of this project. As part of my triangulation and member checking procedures, I shared observation notes with consultants that allowed for collective reflection and made additional revisions based on these conversations. I also shared my results from a critical discourse analysis of their formal and informal documents collected for further reflection and comment

RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

Emerson (1995) points out how researchers must stake out their positionality throughout the research process. This process of continual and ongoing self reflexivity adds to the research process by providing a more fully contextualized and nuanced representation of one's study.

The reflexive lens helps us see and appreciate how our own renderings of others' worlds are not and can never be descriptions from outside those worlds. Rather, they are informed by and constructed in and through those relationships under our study. Hence,

in training the reflexive lens on ourselves, we understand our own enterprise in much the same terms that we understand those we study (p. 216).

Feminist standpoint theory also underscores the importance of positionality particularly in relation to one's subjects. This relationship positions researcher subjects not only as objects of research but as co collaborators in the production of knowledge (Harding, 2004; p. 3). Chicana/o researchers who study their communities have unique viewpoints that provide them with a perspective that Delgado-Bernal (1998) calls "cultural intuition" (p. 7). Drawing from Strauss and Corbin's (1990) notion of "theoretical sensitivity," that is one's personal experiences, existing literature, professional experience and the research process, Delgado Bernal suggests that native researchers can intuit cultural nuances maybe lost to the non native researcher. My subjectivity as a Chicano activist educator who has participated in varying degrees in the work of each site brings to my interview process a degree of cultural intuition (Delgado-Bernal, 1998) that is difficult to replicate by other researchers. This self-reflexivity guards against objectification of the research subject and is informed by an ethic that promotes trust and *confianza* between researcher and subject (Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

Lassiter (2005) describes this level of perception as a form of "sensuous ethnography" that is attuned to "lower' sensory perceptions. According to Lassiter, native informants may provide more nuanced and complex analytic insights (pp. 111-116). In addition to my racial and ethnic background which provided an insider perspective, my involvement as participant in these fieldsites positions me as *action ethnographer* with a more nuanced and critical perspective positioned to collect better data because of my privileged position as participant in these sites and in earlier activities that parallel work by my consultants.

My positioning as Chicana/o activist provided me with a keen level of insight of the native ethnographer. As a Chicana/o activist scholar for many years at UW Madison and most recently at UT and in these community spaces, this perspective allows access and privilege as native informant. Thus, I included my own narrative as well as certain junctures in my description of consultant activities since my life experiences as a Chicana/o activist since the mid 1970's parallel many of my consultant's experiences.

However, I am also cognizant that simultaneously I need to be vigilant in understanding that at certain junctures I may be situated as an outsider. I am sensitive to many of the postmodern and post-structuralist critiques of positionality, even for researchers like myself who propose to study our own native communities. As such, I need to be continuously reflective of my status as academic and my complicity in western ideologies and need to always be on guard to these moments and unequal relationships.

Despite our insider status, Villenas (1996, p. 772) notes how we can be insiders or outsiders to our "research participants at many levels and at different times". In other words, standpoints shift and hence researchers must be always vigilant to "the multiplicity of social and cultural characteristics of a heterogeneous population". Villenas (1996) captures this apparent contradiction in the following quote:

> I needed first to ask myself, how am I, as a Chicana researcher, damaged by my own marginality? Furthermore, how am I complicit in the manipulation of my identities such that I participate in my own colonization and marginalization and, by extension, that of my own people – those with whom I feel a cultural and collective connectedness and commitment? (p. 721)

Still, I prefer to stake out my claim and position as native researcher based on my shared racial, ethnic and class background with the research community I propose to study. In addition, as a long time participant in these three spaces beginning in the early to mid 1990s I consider myself an observant participant in the sense that Vargas (2008)

articulates where my work in support of these organizations in furthering their goals and vision has taken precedence over any academic outcomes. In this same spirit, Villenas (1996) is important here for she points out that one can be self-reflexive about of one's positionality but still assert an indigenous insider position politically/strategically: "I must see my own historical being and space. I must know that I will not "mimic the colonizers" (Perez, as qtd. in Villenas, 1996) and call myself the ethnographer/colonizer, for this insults my gendered, racial memory" (Villenas, 1996; p. 727). Her point here as well as mine is that while on the one hand I recognize my position of privilege as university researcher with some distance from my participants, on the other hand, I identify as Chicana/o ethnographer who has a shared historical struggle against marginalization with my participants and as participant in these communities continue to engage in common subversive strategies and acts of resistance through my community work with these programs.

I also subscribe to Vargas' (2008) reconceptualization of activist research in ethnographic practice as *observant participation* that underscores the role of researcher as active participant "in the organized group, such that observation becomes an appendage of the main activity". This reversal of objective, detached and neutral observer that mainstream research practices value is transformed into active engagement in one's subject and objects of study so that the work of the researcher provides the "means to reflect on the effectiveness, transformation, reformulation, and application" of our daily interventions to reverse all forms of oppression (p. 176).

LIMITATIONS

Because my findings reflect only the standpoint of these sites as well as my own, they may not be necessarily generalizeable to all educational practitioners in the Chicana/a movement. In addition, this study of the contemporary Chicana/o movement and particular cultural and political practices is focused on educational sites only although work done in these sites are certainly shot through with a critical politic that extends beyond educational institutions to be sure. Finally, as this study is focused on sites in Texas, its findings and conclusions may not be necessarily replicable to other sites and spaces. As Freire (2000) acknowledges, and as Guajardo et al (2008) also reminds us, "conditions, history and people are different" (p. 4), hence practices differ due to unique material realities. Still, I believe that the *mezcla* of critical approaches I employ in my study and pedagogical and identity practices used in these sites can be effectively integrated into other social and political contexts (p. 4).

Chapter 4: Findings

> In an institutional setting, the demystification of origins, the reimagining of communities, the investigation of transnational cultural exchange, and the fashioning of alternative social visions to which cultural workers might contribute, are directly linked to issues of pedagogy and activism (Mariscal 2008, p. 72).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents my principal findings organized around key themes that emerged during my conversations with consultants in my study and that are closely linked to the issues of pedagogy and activism that Mariscal refers to in the quote above. If we recall that pedagogy in its original formulation in the 19th and 20th century was created to govern the dispositions and attitudes of the modern citizen, then the activist pedagogy that these Chicana/o educators theorize and practice has the potential for "the fashioning of alternative visions" as I will argue. This chapter provides an overview of themes that emerged during the data collection, thematic coding and analysis phases of my study: 1) Three case studies/histories of collective activist subject/project; 2) Expressions of postmodern Chicana/o pedagogical praxis; and, 3) Reframed indigenity: reconsidering and reconstituting indigenous praxis.

I begin this chapter by contextualizing each site in terms of itsfounding, goals, vision and work captured in the stories and conversations we shared in formal interviews I conducted over a span of six months and in less formal settings as participant in their

project work. As such, I share at certain junctures my involvement in the projects in order to add yet another level of contextualization to their stories. I then turn to a discussion of their pedagogical work that I argue has pushed the boundaries of critical pedagogical theory and practice and culturally relevant approaches to teaching and learning. Their projects provide useful tools for instructors that can become the basis for new forms of teaching and learning. I focus on one particular teaching practice that was key to their work. Storytelling and narrative became especially salient for LGC work but was also used by consultants in all sites. As explained in an article authored by Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta (2008), storytelling serves as a key cultural artifact "through which we conduct our day-to-day work, build our curriculum, and enhance our pedagogies" (p. 4).

Many of my consultants also underscored the importance of indigenous forms of epistemologies and ontologies that informed their political, cultural and pedagogical practices. Thus my discussion of my final theme where I explore indigenous theories and practices informed both their educational work and political practice. Indigenity as practiced by these Chicana/o educators was driven less by a romanticized form of indigenous practice, as early Chicano/a movement activists had theorized, and more by concrete political practices as I describe below. Some of their theorization and practice was based on earlier critical interventions in the 1980s and 1990s by scholars like Gloria Anzaldúa, Cheri Moraga, Chela Sandoval, Emma Perez, and others as well more recent contemporary Chicana intellectuals who link Chicana feminist theory with indigenous, decolonial and transnational social movement theory and activism. Consultants in these spaces have worked to further extend and continue this important critical and feminist intellectual tradition.

1) THREE CASE STUDIES OF COLLECTIVE ACTIVIST SUBJECT

Social cultural context/Postmodernity and low intensity war

In this first section, I share individual and collective project histories, capturing from my consultant's stories the history, goals and visions of their projects. One thematic that cuts across all three sites is a shared collective experience marked by the economic, political, social and cultural effects of globalization and their impact on their communities. Their stories underscore at the personal level the more general effects of postmodernity that one consultant described as *low intensity war* a metaphor that captures both the symbolic and more material forms of violence that these communities face in their daily struggle to survive. One expression of this war waged on these subaltern communities are the national and state educational policies whose social effects, as some critics note, have effectively re-segregated schools into the haves and have-nots. Since 2001, with the enactment of NCLB, these policies have impacted these communities negatively, in terms of increasing high dropout rates for African American and Latina/o youth and school closures for these same communities as documented by scholars like (Noguera (2006), Valenzuela, (1999), Kozol (2005), and Apple (2006) among others.

In more general terms, this *low intensity war* (LIW) seemed to capture other consultants' experiences in the schools and universities and communities where they worked. Consultants acknowledged how this war is played out differently in intellectual and community spaces and experiences. Their stories also underscore and account for differing social realities and nuanced readings of these processes owing partly to the different educational spaces in which they worked. LGC and RSA consultants focused on challenges present in K-12 schooling, while ASCR educators focused on how this war

was played out in higher education today. Their stories begin with a description of their organizations, their work and the working class Mexicana/o and Chicana/o communities they serve; LGC consultants work in the Delta region of South Texas while RSA and ASCR work is based in the Latina/o working class neighborhoods of East Austin. As I described earlier in my study, these communities have faced long histories of racial, ethnic and class oppression that continues to structure their lives now and accounts for how these communities face the more disruptive effects of postmodernity (Harvey, 1989; Limon 1994; Castells, 2006; Noguera, 2003).

As these educators articulate *low intensity war* in terms of localized struggles, they have also reconceptualized educational spaces in dramatic ways that suggests how cultural formations can respond to these forces and sustain critical projects through local and transnational networks of collectivity and communication. Their stories suggest new ways to conceptualize education as a tool for social and political change, using the tools of story, poetry and indigenous practices to enact that work in spaces that are outside formal and traditional sites of teaching and learning (Ellsberg, 2005). Their educational projects have created "communities of practice" in the sense that Wenger (1998) states that participants can be collectively engaged in producing meaning, moulding identity, sustaining practice, and defining new empowered communities.

Resistencia Bookstore/Red Salmon Arts/Save Our Youth

History, goals and vision

Founded by Raul Salinas in 1981, Red Salmon Arts (RSA) is a grassroots Native American/Chicana/o organization that produces cultural arts programming for Latina/o, Black, indigenous and working class communities based in Austin, Texas. Resistencia

Bookstore and Red Salmon Arts were founded by Raul Salinas in 1981 in east Austin, a predominantly ethnic working class community where Salinas had grown up prior to his incarceration in the mid 1960s. Because of its proximity to Austin's downtown business district, this neighborhood has recently become an attractive area for development resulting in changing demographics where white middle class yuppies are displacing working class people of color in alarming rates.

Prior to returning to east Austin in 1981, Salinas moved to Seattle after his release from federal prison in 1973 where he joined *Centro de la Raza* as an instructor and youth counselor and later became Director of the Leonard Peltier Support Committee. Upon his return to Austin, he founded the bookstore and arts organization that would quickly became a meeting space for cultural artists and community activists. He established his indie press, Red Salmon Arts that would go on to publish many local writers, and later in the 1990s also published poetry and art created by youth in his Save Our Youth project workshops.

The bookstore functions principally as a spiritual, educational and political space where local community folk use various cultural art forms, namely poetry, to promote of social justice for local communities. The most visible projects that have emerged over time include the Café Libro, a twice-monthly open mike featuring established and novice writers and the Save Our Youth (SOY) poetry workshops targeting youth in East Austin schools and in detention centers. Salinas' experience in the criminal justice system provides him with a unique perspective that helps him identity with incarcerated youth where he uses writing, poetry and other art forms to heal, liberate and empower them in the same way that it helped him in prison to survive and develop into the writer and activist that he became. He drew on these lessons learned in prison as an educator and

activist to help youth begin their process of personal transformation, lessons that RSA consultants now draw from to continue the legacy of Salinas' work.

These projects have continued to thrive with the support of local activists and UT graduate and under graduate students, including key consultants who lead the workshops and projects at Resistencia and that I include in this study. Their work with youth demonstrates how cultural arts can be used to effect positive change in youth and perhaps be used as a model for replication in other educational spaces by Chican@ and working class communities. As alternative, autonomous educational spaces, Resistencia bookstore and the SOY poetry workshops empower youth to develop strong cultural, racial and academic identities in the manner that African American bookstores have functioned to serve these communities (Fisher 2003, 2005, 2006).

My (his) story vis a vis Resistencia Bookstore/Red Salmon Arts/Save Our Youth

I first met Raul Salinas in 1990 after returning to Texas from Madison, Wisconsin, where I attended the University of Wisconsin as an undergraduate student in the mid 1970s. Although I met Salinas in person on that day in east Austin, I had first been introduced to Salinas' poetry in a Chicano studies class I took at UW taught by Prospero Saiz, a story I shared in Chapter 1 in my autobiographical sketch. We read his groundbreaking poem, *Un Trip Through the Mind Jail* in that class along with other Mexicana/o and Chicana/o writers, the latter writers just emerging out of the crucible of the Chicana/o movement. His work was an inspiration to me and started me on an academic and political trajectory that has brought me to my present study. After our initial meeting, I continued to work with Salinas in a variety of capacities at the Bookstore when I became an Instructor at UT in the Ethnic and Third Word Studies

program where I taught Chicana/o literature and writing. I would invite Salinas to my classes at the beginning and end of the semester, first to introduce my students to him and his work at Resistencia and RSA, then later when I taught my Chicana/o movement literature segment. I also incorporated service-learning components in my syllabus. Students were able to meet that requirement with projects collaboratively produced by both Salinas and other RSA educators. My work with Salinas continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s in various projects that I still continue today with current RSA staffers.

Salinas represented for me the epitome of a scholar activist *par excellance*, someone who successfully bridged their intellectual work with community activism, and who had bridged the divide between academic and community worlds by becoming "fully incorporated in the life of their commons" (Prakash and Esteva, 1998). More than organic intellectuals, these *incarnated intellectuals* according to Prakash and Esteva, push the boundaries of organic intellectual work as we have come to understand it. Whereas Gramsci articulates the role of organic intellectual as one who moves folkloric understanding in their communities to more critical consciousness, incarnated intellectuals, because of their immersion in the daily struggles of their local communities, are able to generate shared communal wisdom for the benefit of their communities. These are generally individuals who have become accepted by their own people as wise elders, a moral, spiritual and political leadership role that Salinas had come to represent for the east Austin Mexicana/o and Chicana/o communities. Salinas represented someone who combined literate and empirical knowledge learned in the universities with the collective and communal knowledges gained from his life-long activist work with communities in struggle, beginning in prison in the 1960s to Resistencia Bookstore until he died in 2008.

RSA social cultural context

As I described earlier, educators at Resistencia and SOY work with communities and youth who face challenging structural realties that have become more acute in the past few years with the downturn of the US economy. In East Austin, where the majority of working class Latina/o and African American students live and attend public schools, they account for the highest dropout rates in ISD statistics. These schools are also where we see the harshest material effects of postmodernity I described above realized.

Besides the negative impacts of services to these schools in terms of material upkeep and academic support, they are also subject to the worst effects of new draconian federal and state educational policies like high stakes standardized testing. The impact of these policies result in higher student push out rates and regular school closures, displacing both students and communities who struggle to deal with the consequences of both. In this sense, it is not hyperbole to suggest that the conditions that these East Austin youth face are in fact aspects and forms of *low intensity war* where the impact to these communities are both structural and psychic. For example, RValdez, RSA executive director and SOY facilitator, describes in the following poem, *Praying for Freedom* the conditions under which these educators operate when working with incarcerated African American and Latino/a youth at Gardner Betts, a minimum security youth detention center in Austin, Texas.

Sliding past the first line of personnel,
We are lead down a hall.
Us-a ragtag army carrying bent pens, torn paper,

& an upright bass.

Thick steel doors with small rectangular windows

Separate us from locked-up Black and Brown youth.

With….

A young brother tells us the music calms him (RValdez, 2011).

This poem is a graphic representation of dehumanizing conditions Black and Brown youth face in the jails and prisons - conditions of low intensity war in the criminal justice system and not too far removed from warfare in the neighborhoods and schools they come from. As Joao Vargas points out, this *low intensity war* against youth of color conspires outside the prisons as well; their experiences in their neighborhoods, at home and in the schools where "school and teachers and curricula collaborate to the school to prison pipeline" (2010). These social realities that Vargas articulates here are supported by studies and media reports that describe conditions faced by these youth and communities where drugs, broken families, poor self-esteem, and under-resourced schools frequently lead to incarceration in the criminal justice system in a vicious cycle that is difficult to break (ACLU School-to-Prison Pipeline brochure retrieved 3/25/11 from http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice/school-prison-pipeline).

Vargas and others have equated schooling for these communities with social apartheid where new forms of academic tracking conspire to push youth of schools and into the criminal justice system as the ACLU report I cite above argues (Kozol, 2005; Noguera, 2003). The reality of schooling for these youth disrupts the ideological creed that public school education leads Americans to achieve the American dream according to Vargas. For these youth, this dream instead is an American nightmare that leads to

perpetual underemployment, unemployment or to prison: “to study hard and to be a good student and to find a job are difficult to carry out in schools where the teachers are badly trained, the resources are lacking, and whose ‘education’ seldom lifts anyone out of badly paid work or joblessness” (Vargas, 2010; p. 7).

A recent example of educational apartheid in east Austin is the experience that one east Austin neighborhood and school faced when dealing with the effects of new federal policies, in this case the NCLB Act of 2001. Johnston High School was under threat at the time to be shut down by Texas Education Agency, Texas’ regulatory body for public schools, for failing to meet minimum passing standards of TAKS and TEKS requirements mandated by federal NCLB law. TAKS/TEKS are standardized tests that are administered throughout the K12 schools beginning in grade school and ending in 12th grade where passage is required in order to graduate. Texas schools were the first adopters of high stakes testing that has now been adopted nationwide. High stakes standardized testing has been criticized by critics who charge that standardized testing is culturally biased and fails to accurately capture a student’s skills and content knowledge (Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela contends that these federal and state accountability measures amount to a form of “subtractive schooling” that effectively penalizes students and communities who reside in poorly resourced neighborhoods and schools. Instead, she proposes more fair and equitable assessment measures that capture other criteria to judge academic success. She also suggest how schools should be reformed to consider more culturally relevant approaches to teaching and learning that are more caring and supportive rather than subject students to alienating schooling practices that these policies actually create for these ethnic working class communities.

In the following interview excerpt, RSalinas describes an interaction with a group of Latino and African American students at Johnston High School who participated in his poetry workshop. His description aptly captures the effects of schooling policies and practices and especially high stakes testing, on student self-esteem and perception:

> One of the things about *Save Our Youth* is that the kids become published authors, they produce. . I said man, that was really good, and we went to the school and pulled it off, we told them "Don't let anyone tell you that you are low-performance students, it's their problem that the school is low-performance. You can't tell me that your low-performance, you've been here afterschool for 3 weeks 'til 5:30, you're writing stuff." Just one had graduated, and we had all the same youth the next year, and we said "yeah, we want them". They tightened up their stuff. We said, "Low performance, that's what they're calling your school. What do you think about it?" and they said, "There's a war going on-what do you think about it?" "Write a poem." "What about?" Immigration. Just one word like that, just have them write whatever. "Well I can't spell that." We said, don't worry about the spelling, we'll take care of that later when we edit. When we edit, we're going to erase, rewrite. "No man, you can't erase, that's my stuff." There's a way to say it better. We kinda give them where they can still let it out but without bad mouth, cussing. If it's for effect or something. Some of them rap, but after we get done with them, they don't do too much rap, because we talk to them about the writing aspect. They have the little book they can put on their shelf, give to their parents, and whatever we have left we sell (RSalinas interview2, 10/2007).

In a scene that I witnessed many times over the years in similar encounters in these workshops, Salinas implores his students to tackle local issues that emanate from "low intensity war" in their neighborhoods and schools. The social conditions that scholars have documented in urban schools where black and brown students live in disproportionate numbers are also a reality for these east Austin communities. Besides the lack of resources, networks, and social capital in comparison to their wealthy counterparts in west Austin, they face the added burden of standardized testing where teachers focus their energies simply on "teaching to the test" a form of banking education that Freire and others argue fails to teach critical thinking and real world skills. The

impact of these policies results in large-scale failure rates for these youth and the disciplining of their schools by school districts and the state education agencies like TEA. Besides these very real material effects, both youth and schools also faced symbolic and psychic violence as a result of how they are represented in school reports and in the media as Salinas' excerpt above points out. Labeled as "low performing" and "at risk" students and schools, these representations signify to all academic and social failure further perpetuating a deficit discourse that serves to extenuates their material realities (Brown, 2010).

This deficit-based discourse lays the blame on individuals rather than structural conditions that these communities face, the material violence from shoddy and rundown schools. This discursive or symbolic violence of ongoing proliferation of deficit discourses operates "through the concomitant processes of naming and narrating the unfolding of material violence by elites" (Callahan, 2003). While social and material disadvantages suffered by Latina/o communities as a result of continued Anglo political and economic dominance defines structural violence, symbolic violence masks these material conditions via "blame the victim" deficit discourses or through educational policies and pedagogical practices that work to sustain this dominance. These workshops also provide a space for students to reflect on processes of subject position that educational policies and banking forms of pedagogy like standardized testing maintain.

Along with the news media and district and TEA accountability reports, this discourse becomes part and parcel of the culture of violence that along with the difficulties perpetrated by material conditions maintains and perpetuates a cycle of poverty and oppression for these communities. By failing to account for these communities' unique cultural knowledges and practices, standardized testing promotes a

one size fits all means of assessment. As critics of high stakes testing have shown, the repercussions have an effect of "othering" African American, Latina/o and other cultural minority youth that don't have the social and cultural capital of their fellow white and middle class students (Valenzuela, 1999; Kozol, 2005; Noguera, 2003). These processes of "othering," according to some scholars, devalue black and brown communities based on difference from the norm (Collins, 2000; Anzaldua, 1987). Collins and Anzaldua both address this process of "othering" that implies, according to Collins, "the devaluation of the subjectivity of the oppressed" (1986, p. 18). Ways that marginalized communities resist the effects of social processes of dehumanization and oppression require "self-evaluation" and "self-definition" according to Collins, the kind of strategies of resistance that poetry workshop facilitators enact at the RSA and Resistencia and are part and parcel of the ongoing positional war waged daily.

Resistencia as safe space and place

Salinas' work at Resistencia through his SOY workshops strives to help youth address the daily challenges and struggles face by these communities and their youth. Salinas and other SOY educators have worked to model and create a safe space where poetry, writing and the arts can serve as a vehicle to counter the effects of dehumanization in the working class Black and Brown neighborhoods and schools in East Austin. SOY workshops became autonomous spaces of respite where students' shared personal experiences dealing with these social issues became fodder for collective discussion and inspiration for their artistic expressions. These poetry workshops provide youth with an outlet to express themselves through poetry, first a form of healing that helps them to deal with the effects of war. This process of healing also provides them

with the tools needed "to learn to be human again…" the first step of engagement in these workshops. As Vargas describes in an introduction to a recently published chapbook of SOY youth poetry, their works express the personal and collective anguish of imprisonment inside the cages of jails and prisons and of the violence they face outside, at home, in their neighborhoods and in school. Poetry also provides them with the means to recapture positive memories and stories of their neighborhood, family and loved ones to conjure up a better world that arms them to reclaim their humanity, a "humanity that emerges laced with a necessary utopia" (Vargas, 2008, p. 9).

In my conversations with students and teachers while helping to conduct these workshops, they tell me that opportunities for this type of engaged instruction and education are rare in their schools. Rote and repetitive drills and instruction by instructors who are forced to "teach to the test" are the norm in school. Students who resist what are, in effect, banking forms of education end up being pushed out for failing to conform (Freire, 1970). Coupled with these educational practices are the gentrifying processes of dislocation and displacement that I described above in terms of an accelerating postmodernity that adds to their already difficult social problems as a result of being racially segregated communities throughout most of the 20th century (Acuna, 2000; Limon, 1994; Kozol, 2005; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999).

Pinto politics and pedagogy

For RSA and Resistencia participants, poetry and writing workshops are the cultural artifacts used to engage with east Austin high school youth around local school, community and family issues. Poetry and writing of personal stories are key pedagogical tools that enable local and critical discourses to reframe youth dispositions and *habitus*

and provide the space where new cultural and political understanding can occur and have the potential to enact and enable the production of more politicized identity practices.

RSA/Resistencia consultants use poetry and writings of youth centered on family and neighborhood issues to makes their writing practices a more real and less abstract process. Contextualizing poetry in this way, in the social and ecological contexts of youth lives, enables consultants to develop in youth more empowering self-identity practices (Grunewald, 2003). Scholars like LMendoza and Teresa Acosta remind us of the power of literary practice as strong cultural tool of change. Acosta (1990) tells us how poetry helped her document Tejana history because the "emotional facts of (Tejanas) lives are not available in archives and history cannot express … for us. They must find their voices in imaginative literature to become part of Tejana history" (qtd. in Mendoza, 2008; p. 13).

An important element of their pedagogical work I was able to trace to Salinas early work in the prisons as an educator, writer and activist. AGomez referenced this practice pinto pedagogy to honor this linkage to Salinas' past and to an important critical residual tradition in Chicano/o movement practice, especially the submovement we now know as the prison rebellion movement. Historians like Gomez (2006) have uncovered these important but underexamined expressions of the new social movement work of the 1960s and 1970s, wherebythis radical movement linked educational work with political and cultural transformation. In his study, Gomez locates the origins of the educational and political work at Resistencia in his prison activist work at Marion and Leavenworth federal prisons where Salinas became politicized.

These consultants reframed a pedagogical practice that RSalinas had used in his educational work in prisons into a form that they employed in their SOY educational

work with youth. They sought to tie the youth's personal experiences in East Austin schools and in prison detention centers with larger global issues in their SOY project. Salinas, who was a major representative figure of this movement, incorporated these teachings in his work at *El Centro de La Raza*, then later at Resistencia Bookstore, where he refined his work throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Central to this pedagogical practice is the identity work that these consultants do with youth in their Save Our Youth poetry workshops that focus on contesting the abject and racist figurations these youth face in schools, neighborhoods and detention centers and reinscribing more positive self representations through this work.

New forms of solidarity and networking

Consultants also described how RSA/Resistencia Bookstore has fostered new expressions of solidarity in tandem with their educational work based on an activist ethic of social change thus facilitating new collectivities. Participants strategically create autonomous, third spaces outside the academy and schools. "(Resistencia Bookstore) became a place of empowerment, of articulation of a critique and of a refinement of a critique," according to LMendoza, "because people go there and challenge each other, explore new ideas, listen to other voices, … because it's a Chicano center, Native center, multi-ethnic, and because of the many values it imparts, it becomes a magnet as a *safe space* to explore and challenge and critique" (LMendoza interview, 2/2010). Since these educators also saw their pedagogical work as fundamentally tied to their political projects, questions surrounding organizational strategies were also pertinent. Participants suggested new, more postmodern forms of collaboration that were more situational and

dynamic based in local, place-based struggles, "local contentious practice" (Holland and Lave, 2001) enacted in their day-to-day political and educational work.

AGomez describes how RSalinas and other participants within the RSA have developed a network-based organizational structure that builds on the organizational model first created by RSalinas in 1981 when the bookstore was founded but perhaps even earlier to the late 1960s and 1970s when RSalinas was organizing at Leavenworth and Marion federal prisons. In this excerpt, AGomez traces Resistencia and RSA genealogy to these earlier projects:

> For Resistencia, there was Raul's life, his trajectory and him as a person being an energy at that space that was so central. But, his energy and his networks and his strengths, the whole reflection, the transformation, the process, he was as much as his spirit would allow him to be up front about it. Because these are hard painful things; as you get older, I've learned that it's easier to reflect and say, yeah, I did that, it did have that consequence. There was that energy and there was what he part of that was also *Resistencia* and being part of who he was for 40 years, I mean, you know who rolls through that place, the folks who roll through there, publically and privately. Those are networks that are unreplicable and that have nodes all across the country and that have in fact, been really central in both the political work that I do but also the research that I do because it is so related. I think if you remind me that is something to get back to. I wouldn't be where I'm at, in all sorts of the senses, without these two particular spaces, but without the struggles that existed in these spaces before I got there (AGomez interview, 6/2010).

For Gomez and other RSA and SOY consultants, Resistencia Bookstore represents a space to sustain and continue the visions of the Chicana/o movement where participants did not separate their education and activist work. Salinas' work also represents for Gomez, other scholar activists and myself, a new form of intellectual work that serves as a model for later activists like ourselves who seek out news ways to bridge our academic and community work.

Llano Grande Center

Histories, goals and visions

The Llano Grande Research Center (LGC), based in the Delta region of South Texas and surrounding Rio Grande valley communities was founded in 1997 by Miguel and Francisco Guajardo in 1997. Although that year marked the institutionalization of the LGC as a community research center at Edcouch-Elsa High School (EEHS), the work of the LGC had already been initiated by Francisco Guajardo in the early 1990s when Guajardo began organizing college trips to Ivy League Schools in the early 1990's as part of a college preparation project. The Guajardos had supported these college visits through fundraisers organized by students in Francisco Guajardo's English class at EEHS. Because of the success of the project that resulted in dozens of EEHS students getting accepted to Ivy League schools, they garnered the attention of private funding sources like the Annenburg and Kellogg foundations in 1997. With their support, the LGC was formed and institutionalized into an educational and community research center led by youth and local community representatives. They would soon form an advisory board made up of LGC student graduates, Edcouch Elsa teachers and community members, including LGC graduate Cristina Salinas, a current advisory board member and one of my consultants. The center is currently staffed by Delia Perez, LGC graduate and director of the LGC, Olga Cardoso, LGC Youth Director and Juan Ozona, who directs the Digital Storytelling Project at the LGC, all consultants in my study.

--My (his) story vis a vis the Llano Grande Center

My story begins in 1990 when I first met Miguel Guajardo who hired me for a job with Community In Schools, a community based organization that provides academic support to East Austin schools through a variety of after school programs. Although that position was short lived, I continued my relationship with Guajardo in the 1990's while we were both enrolled as graduate students at UT-Austin. Although in different graduate programs, he at Urban Studies and Education and I in Ethnic and Third World Studies, we continued to cross paths in our community work. We were both invested in projects that supported youth development, he with the LGC and his academic studies and I with my work at Resistencia bookstore, other youth projects and my teaching at UT Austin, Austin Community College and St. Edwards University. My LGC network expanded beyond Guajardo when I met David Rice, an LGC instructor and author of a number of children's books, and Cristina Salinas, a history graduate student and also member of the ASCR.

Guajardo also symbolized for me someone who was successful in linking two disparate spaces and worlds of academia and community. Beginning with his work at Communities in Schools where I first met him, I saw someone who was committed to working with combing his work with disenfranchised minority youth with his academic pursuits. He sought out spaces in the university that could facilitate his work with youth by developing teaching and research skills for that end.

In the 1990s while we were both in graduate school, I saw him combine his work at UT with his work at Edcouch Elsa at the very early stages of LGC development. I saw his unselfish commitment to that work in the weekly six hour trips he organized to the valley where he would transport his cadre of undergraduate students to facilitate this

community work. That deeply rooted commitment to the Edcouch Elsa community where he was raised has translated into the post high school success of the Edcouch Elsa students who continue to thrive at Ivy league schools and also back in Edcouch Elsa community where many often return to work. This model of intellectual and community work and knowledge project is rooted in place-based and collective struggles that this community faces daily in social, politcal and educational arenas.

Because of LGC's success in transforming their community over the past fifteen years, participants are now modeling this work in spaces like the Community Learning Exchange where their form of placed knowledge theory and practice represents an alternative epistemological and political project to successfully organize other communities in struggle. Guajardo's personal and political trajectory provides yet another model of intellectual engagement, that like Salinas, provides educators with lessons that can help us articulate how to further our community projects for social and educational change.

LGC social cultural context

As I described earlier, LGC students at Edcouch-Elsa High School have had to contend historically with inferior schools and as a result generally fare poorly in a number of educational areas in comparison to their wealthier Anglo peers, locally and across the state. This is primarily due to historically based structural inequalities that I documented in Chapter 2 of my dissertation, but also the dominant discourses that pervade these communities as I also alluded to above. Just like the deficit-based discourses in mainstream research studies and media reports that East Austin youth and communities face, these South Texas communities are also subjected to class and race

inflected narratives that position valley students as “low performing”, “at risk”, or some other deficit model discourse.

The conditions of these schools are due in part to the history of Mexicana/o and Anglo social conflict as a result of socio economic and cultural marginalization of the brown communities in this borderlands region. This deep south region of Texas that straddles, culturally, socially and politically, the U.S. and Mexico nation states has been marginalized historically and geographically, at least since the early 19th century a story I shared earlier in my study. Since that time, it has existed as socio-economic peripheral zone to Texas and the US historically, and has defined this region’s cultural and political development. This marginalization still continues into the present as evident by a number of social, economic and educational markers. Even today, this four county region that defines the Texas valley, or *el valle,* as it has been commonly known, is still one of the poorest region in the US. Educational systems in the valley reflect this socio economic, cultural and political marginalization. One aspect of this marginalization has been an assimilationist curriculum that Valenzuela’s study on subtractive schooling critiques. One effect of traditional pedagogy and curricular practices like these is a devaluation of the Spanish languagein these predominantly Mexicana/o communities. Valenzuela argues that these practices create a sense of confusion and conflict regarding these students’ sense of identity. It also results in the loss of student native tongue and as such has serious repercussions at home affecting cross-generational communication between grandparents and children.

To counter these and other fracturing effects of traditional schooling practices, participants at the LGC have designed a myriad of projects that work to empower youth to be academic leaders. This work has resulted in not only increasing college success

rates like those I described above, but also has produced strong community leaders. The success of the LGC projects is due to their merging of skills, abilities and dispositions as intellectuals that bridge their scholarship with community issues. One pedagogical tool that was foundational to their work and continues to inform all aspect of their project are the oral history projects, designed and conducted by LGC students, that guide their teaching, research and learning and has functioned to address the fracturing effects of postmodernity that these communities face.

--LGC place-based teaching and learning

Besides sending students to Ivy League schools, LGC consultants have realized their goal and vision to recreate their schools and communities by also creating innovative research projects and digital video programs. These student-led projects reformed the curriculum in their schools by basing this pedagogy on local *funds of knowledge* (Moll, 1992). These student-led and community-based research initiatives form the basis of a new educational practice, an organic and grounded teaching and learning approach that required a new language and discourse, according to MGuajardo. This form of critical and culturally relevant pedagogy that they called *place-based pedagogy* builds on some of the lessons learned from educational movement activists that sought more inclusive historical, literary and cultural traditions. They also sought to ground and situate their pedagogy in ways that accounted for contemporary social and political realities that demanded "new social rules for engagement," as MGuajardo states here:

> For us, when we started doing this work, back in the 80s here on campus and in the 90s when we expanded it, we understood that we needed to move out of the way at some point. That doesn't mean disengage, because we still are in the

> middle of it, but the road has changed. *La otra,* was the language. Mi carnal, Paco has a story that the first time he went back to the classroom, and he used the word Chicano, it scared the shit out of people and they alienated him, because they were mexicanos: to find the language and to learn how to appropriate it at different times. Movements, and that particular one, belonged to someone else. Did we benefit from it? Absolutely, and I think because we understand and wanted to mimic it, but in a different way. The social rules for engagement had changed. The language needed to change and the strategies needed to change. (MGuajardo interview, 3/2010)

MGuajardo underscores the importance of a new language and discourse to reflect and address changing realities, audiences, and constituencies, particularly the influx of new immigrant youth that still will be grounded in more critical traditions of Chicana/o movement educational and political practices. This new language and discourse based and grounded in community extends to classroom pedagogy and to new spaces albeit always reconstituted and rearticulated to meet changing social and political conditions.

Building intergenerational communities

An important goal and vision of LGC participants was their effort to address the fracturing effects of postmodernity and forms of LIW that I described above. One effect that OCardoso described in our interview was the increasing generational division between youth and their grandparents in Mexicana/o households, in part exacerbated by educational practices in the schools as described above. Their oral history project that has evolved into their digital storytelling project has worked to help successfully bridge elders and youth and community. JPerez, another LGC consultant who helps lead the digital stoytelling project says that the LGC hit upon this idea as they were conducting college trips to Ivy League schools. While educating and empowering youth was LGC's principal focus, they wanted to reach out to the community to help build the project and research center. The challenge was how to extend what was then a community of practice

that was youth based to one that included the local community at large. They wanted to create a more inclusive community practice, a new sense of political solidarity so to speak, that crossed generations, a multigenerational community of practice made up of youth and elders: "So already there was this idea that began to crystallize about the community and the importance of changing the community even," says JPerez (interview 5/2010).

They turned naturally to the stories and *cuentos* of their grandparents and parents, those *funds of knowledge* that had nurtured and sustained them as youth, as the Guajardos had written about in numerous articles about their project (2008, 2004) and shared with me in our conversations (MGuajardo interview, 3/2010; FGuajardo interview, 4/2010). This would become the epistemological and ontological basis of their work, locally informed knowledges and practices that the Guajardos had been raised on as they grew up in their South Texas home. They were also the principal forms of Mexicana/o expressive practice for this predominantly Mexicana/o South Texas Delta community where stories were the principal forms of documentation and communication whether as told in the forms of *cuentos*, *dichos* or *corridos* as recent scholarship have shown (Limon, 1992; Paredes, 1958; Flores, 2000). Youth first began collecting stories of their grandparents and documenting their personal memories and experiences as a means to connect to their grandparents and to their history through the recollections and stories of their family, and not to connect to their local history via textbooks. These stories were captured digitally in video, archived for public access and incorporated into the LGC curriculum. These data became the key cultural artifacts and tools to bridge school and community, as JPerez explains here:

> Well I think its fair to say that even before Llano Grande was formalized in 1997, and this grant was submitted that the idea of sending kids to college was not enough anymore. And you know, that because by the time we were talking about going to college, you know Frank was already beginning to ask the questions "Well what do you see yourselves doing after college. What ties do you have to the community? How well do you know who you are and where you come from?" So we began doing things like interviewing our grandparents you know and documenting stories about them. So already there was this idea that began to crystallize about the community and the importance of changing the community even. You know by that point you know we were already beginning to hear from Frank and other people like Delia you know that if we wanted to see Edcouch Elsa become a better place, that we needed new leadership and that the new leadership was going to be us. So it wasn't enough to go to college anymore. We needed to come back and become those leaders. Even though the Llano Grande Center had not even formalized yet those ideas were already beginning to spring up. I think (JPerez interview, 5/2010).

LGC's digital storytelling project captured personal stories of local family and community peoples and combined digital video technology and oral history methodology in their community research to address local community issues in the schools and neighborhoods. LGC youth have captured over two hundred local oral histories that make up their digital archive of narratives that forms the basis for their research, teaching and political work in their community and have become the foundation of their place-based pedagogy. These local, community-based *testimonios* has reformed their curriculum and research practices and have helped to create new knowledges based on the personal stories of elders. This has served to validate their community's histories and cultures and has become the basis of local epistemological and identity practices. By capturing collective memories of their *abuelas* and *abuelos*, LGC students are transformed into active participants in the recuperation and revision of their histories and new identities as student/teachers.

These pedagogical practices create the conditions for youth to move to *conscientizacion* and become mobilized as real social change agents and not simply passive consumers of knowledge as traditional banking forms of education strive to produce. These new knowledge's, if considered as localized, alternative epistemological projects, also suggest emergent community formations suggested by Raymond Williams and his notion, "structures of feelings" (1977). Williams argues that emergent formations that build on residual practices, like the personal stories that LGC youth have collected, may coalesce into more critical and institutionalized formations if nurtured collectively. As Williams explains, "structures of feelings" are cultural formations not yet fully formed, rather as "affective elements of consciousness and relationships" they are precursors to more concrete social experiences and institutionalized practices that can strengthen critical awareness through collective analysis and material practice. I suggest that the work that the LGC has done using place based pedagogies to empower youth and local communities suggest an emergent cultural and political formation that is already effecting real material change in this community as evidenced by college success rates, changes in schooling practices and community development projects and empowering individual and collective subjectivities and identities that their work has produced.

Extending LGC network outward to CLE

MGuajardo describes below how the LGC has extended their educational and political project beyond south Texas. This was done after considerable introspection and conversations with the local community that stayed true to the founding mission of the LGC-- the production of situated knowledge that benefits local communities. At the same

time, the LGC recognized their role as public intellectuals to extend and share their knowledge to other publics:

> Part of taking the language and to take the ideas to a different space so that the whole point of Llano Grande can be an idea, and the values and a way of life, I do that in my classroom all the time. That's the opportunity to transform. So, we can do it at the micro-level and then, how do we do it systemically? A lot of people have been introduced to the Llano Grande work; I get emails all the time, so how do we take this work and transform it so that it becomes much more public. Yet, not neglecting the local, *porque* what we learned is that we can spend all our time greeting people who want to come and see, but when are we going to do the work. Our idea is how do we take this, continue to do this support that, and open it up so we can do it more? So, we start the Community Learning Exchange (CLE). That's another way of pushing. Then, we have *comaradas* in higher ed saying what we're doing is killing us, we want to do something different, we want to connect. This is a vehicle (LGC and CLE) for doing that. The next thing to do is convene people that already get it and just need to expand the conversation, and every time we meet …(MGuajardo interview, 3/2010).

Organizationally, LGC's strategy is to build nurturing relationships outward, and to build new cohorts like the Community Learning Exchange that connect hundreds of educators throughout the U.S. and that incorporate the research and organizational strategies that have transformed the LGC community. Through the support of the CLE network and the resources these new community partners bring to the LGC, they are able to move to the next level of civic engagement. This model is structured around the following cultural, political and pedagogical forms: 1) periodic gatherings where participants share stories of struggle, celebrate victories, discuss challenges; 2) article publications and other forms of public dissemination; 3) maintenance of networks using internet and web technologies. In a recently published article, "Social Advocacy and Community Change: Relationships, Resistance and Revolution," Miguel and Fransciso Guajardo (2011) describe this network-building using the CLE model where they expand

on this reframed sense of collective leadership first established and developed in the LGC:

> As we explore and carve out a new space for social advocacy, we are also proactive to enhance and deepen the work with our partners while expanding the theory, philosophy and practice into new communities. As we work to expand this new practice, we are also developing new social technologies. One of the new social technologies is creating learning exchanges in different regions of the country. These exchanges will deepen the work and simultaneously expand the social network for others to learn and contribute to this type of social advocacy" (Guajardo and Guajardo 2011, p. 41).

As participants in the LGC have begun to expand their work and extend their network outward, they do not necessarily work to replicate their model of success, rather they propose that other organizations in their network organize around this notion of situational knowledge that draws on local resources to build their own programs. One method they propose is conducting asset-based research studies that identify existing resources and networks and build capacity on the basis of local social capital that perhaps has been historically overlooked and underutilized. One challenge faced by all three sites concerns the mediation of local and global issues that can only come through continual theoretical reflection and praxis based on a *epistemology of place* (Nee-Benham, 2011, p. 52) whose elements I elaborate upon more fully later.

The community and student network nurtured in south Texas was extended nationally through the support of Annenburg and Kellogg private foundation grants and is now international and transnational in scope, geographically and culturally. The CLE history described here is a more recent and emergent expression of the collective subject and project building. This project entailed the collective development of social capital and networking over the past 10 years at the LGC that now extends to the eleven community groups that make up the CLE. The LGC has expanded on the political and

educational work of the LGC from a successful local organizational model outward that now includes a national network of groups called the CLE, based on the place based vision of epistemological and ontological practice.

Miguel and Paco Guajardo (2011) explain how their experiences with the LGC and now their work with the CLE has confirmed their belief that activist educators need to reframe our senses of organizing and leadership:

> Social advocacy and collaborative leadership are at the core of the (re) organizing movement and community change strategy. This (re) organizing is also about reframing and reconcenceptualizing the reasons and the premise for the work. The issue of dignity, justice, agency, and leadership must be front and center and continuously negotiated and shared. In short, the question of who owns and is involved in the process is critical to the success of social advocacy and change (p. 36).

This networking form of political and educational work is part of a renewed and reframed sense of Chicana/o praxis and is consistent with the emergent and postmodern renewal of radical politics in the contemporary era, as some scholars have observed (Castells, 2006). An appropriate description of this new organizational model of political organization is one used by Arturo Escobar who describes them as "assemblages" to underscore their more dynamic and situated nature. These new political formations are potentially responsive to changing local and global realities that characterize the fragmenting nature of our postmodern world, according to Escobar (2008).

New networked organization

The network model that the Guajardos describe is developed locally, based upon experiences and struggles they faced while building their project in South Texas. Coupled with cibercultura, a transnational practice developed by Mexican scholar Jorge Gonzalez,

these organizational practices become key cultural tools used by LGC educators. These networking models of organizing have been used by LGC consultants to create linkages with students that attend Ivy League colleges and facilitate their return home to their communities as many have done. This model of collective subject/project that was theorized and put into practice at the LGC is now being extended to other political allies to help them deepen their work with partners using the Community Learning Exchange (CLE) as an organizing structure:

> We have expanded from an educational entity that responded to the needs of youth, families, and community to an entity that is much more committed to working with issues of community development, policy, and political/public engagement (Behrens et al in Nee-Benham 2011, p. 49).

CSalinas suggests a new vision of organization that is flexible, situational and responsive to local conditions:

> Yeah, that was an example of what we were trying to do at the ASCR. It was that idea in action. We were also doing things at the ASCR, too, that were enacting those ideas, but that is an example, I felt. I won't go into all the complexities of Llano Grande because it's a really complex organization, it's like an *amoeba*, it moves in so many ways. I was doing these two things, ASCR and Llano Grande, very intensely at the same time and I was sort of involved in the processes (CSalinas interview, 1/2010).

This form of organizing and solidarity building implied by CSalinas' reference, an "amoeba"-like process of development, suggest the postmodern networking model of organization-building described by Castells (2004), Della Porta and Diani, (2006), Escobar (2008) and others. This model is a departure from the more organizationally bound leftist formations with centralized leadership to more loosely defined shifting centers of power based on multiple networks nodes. In this network model of social

movement development, power is more equitably distributed along multiple organizational nodes. Power is also distributed along generational lines as other LGC educators like OCardoso and MGuajardo indicated ensuring continuity with earlier movement practices on the one hand and with local epistemological practices handed down by family and community elders. For LGC educators, their pedagogical practices and tools like their digital storytelling project helps facilitate the building of solidarity resonant with the kind of practices that Whittier note help promote continuity for the feminist movement. For both feminist and Chicana/o movement activists, these generational micro-cohorts help spur their movement's growth and institutionalization based on solidarity through the building of autonomous spaces (Whittier, 2006).

Another practice that helps build continuity for the LGC instills the importance of giving back to one's community. MGuajardo describes it as "coming back home" to one's community after their completing college, a model of social movement continuity. We see the success of that model in practice as the current LGC leadership was drawn from LGC's first group of student graduates and are key players in developing the current cohort of students. This collective model of sustainability helps ensures continuity as each successive micro-cohort of student leaders works to develop their own academic and community skills through shared community practices. This more broadly defined idea of education beyond traditional banking forms focuses on the development of youth leadership in multiple areas, both academically and civically, and helps promote sustainability for the LGC community. LGC students also form critical nodes of organizational development as they travel to Ivy League schools, build social and cultural capital and return back to their communities again.

Advanced Seminar in Chicana/o Research

History, goals and vision

The Advanced Seminar in Chicana/o Research was founded by a group of graduate students in the early 1990s as the Advanced Seminar on Postcolonial Borderlands, the latter title underscoring its postcolonial and borderlands analytic focus. When it was founded in the mid 1990s, the APSB, as it was initially conceived, was comprised of as a disciplinary cross-section of Chicana/o graduate students who had become politically disenchanted and alienated within their respective departments. The group was a collective response to a real and perceived lack of institutional support for Chicana/o activist graduate students at UT-Austin, many who had just recently arrived as newly minted graduate students. They sought more critical and community engaged forms of academic research and pedagogical practices that were absent in their disciplinary departments and the academic work that was required of them.

The goals and vision of the ASPB and later ASCR was to provide a safe space where graduates students could collectively support both each other in their academic and political projects in a convivial and nonhierarchical venue. They also envisioned new forms of mentoring that departed from traditional one on one faculty student relationship where faculty generally dictated the graduate apprenticeship process. Instead, ASCR members strived towards a more democratic mentoring relationship that was more dialogic and collective. They called for radicalizing the mentoring process of graduate training along with democratizing other stages of traditional academic mentoring.

In this contested space that is the academy, radical mentoring is a component of an alternative collective mentoring that inverts more traditional forms based on individualist and hierarchical social relationships. It is also positional cultural warfare

that is key to radical academic work and its survival. CSalinas explains how the ASCR envisioned a radical and collective mentorship that refused the more traditional forms found in the academy:

> We were trying to think through how to redefine how education is being done at the graduate level because normally it was defined by the student's relationship with the professor, their so-called mentor. It was a very unequal relationship, very one-dimensional relationship, then you're taught to compete with your colleagues, with other graduate students, to have this relationship with your mentor to produce your work. It seemed to me very ridiculous because if the mentor isn't good, if they don't teach you what you need to know, then you can't possibly learn anything. So that was one thing, on one level, the idea of *collective mentorship,* rather than relying on this professor to pass along their information to you. This was a way that we're trying to look at how to help each other find a new way to relate to each other that is not just an unequal, one-dimensional relationship. It's more true to the way we normally operate, like in communities, like back home. You're part of these multi-dimensional relationships and so the way I recognized it was that we were trying to recreate that sort of inter-relational connection amongst each other. It just makes more sense, there is a refusal to compete against your *colegas* (CSalinas interview, 1/2010).

CSalinas describes various kinds of mechanisms to build community and collective subject; collective mentorship as an aspect of collective subject and conviviality; and redefinition of the social relationships within the traditional classroom, that is more intersubjective and horizontal modes of interaction vs. traditional professor-student relationships. ACSR would provide a space absent in the institution for collectively shared academic and teaching support and that would also provide a space where students could also link academic training to their political organizing in university, community and transnational nodes of network building.

In its various iterations over the roughly ten year span of its active existence, members have come and gone on to pursue academic careers while also maintaining their political network via a variety of communication forms. The participants that I

interviewed (Manolo Callahan, Cristina Salinas, Veronica Martínez-Matsuda, Lilia Rosas and Alan Gomez) represent a cross section of ASPB and ASCR formations, some who have been with the organization from its inception in the 2000s when many of its core members graduated and move to other universities. Still, many of its members remain connected in a loosely formed political network using computer and internet technologies.

--My (his)story vis a vis the Advanced Seminar in Chicana/o Research

My story with the ASCR begins in the late 1990s while still a graduate student in the Ethnic and Third World Studies program at UT Austin. I was drawn to the ASCR like other graduate students who sought a space of support outside the university where we could bridge our academic and community activist work. Such spaces were lacking on the UT campus even in programs like ethnic studies that had been originally conceived in the 1960s and 1970s to serve that function. These programs had become according to many of the consultants I interviewed ossified and transformed into institutionalized formations that reflected many of the disciplinary formations that social movement activists had challenged during the height of campus activism. Many of these graduate students were associated with ethnic studies on campus, the CMAS and with specialized programs in traditional disciplinary fields like History, Anthropology and English. In the History department, faculty and students had created the Borderlands program that legitimized the field of US Mexican borderlands.

In the Department of Anthropology, the Anthropology Activist program provided a space for more radical explorations in critical ethnographic and critical qualitative research studies. The English Department had established an Ethnic and Third World

Studies program that focused on ethnic literatures and cultural and postcolonial studies. Despite the creation of these spaces, these graduate students searched for more spaces that provides for more concrete and organic political engagement. While undergraduate and graduate student groups like *el Movimiento Estudiantil de Atzlan* (MEChA) and the Chicana/o/Latina/o Graduate Student Association (CLGSA) provided some opportunities, these Chicana and Chicano graduate students saw the need for something different that would facilitate the growing activism associated around emergent campus, labor and transnational movement where linkages between all could be more easily and collaboratively facilitated. I became involved with members of the APSB in the mid 1990s and worked more closely in workshops facilitated by the ASCR after I left graduate school in the late 1990s to pursue teaching opportunities, always with intent to return to complete my PhD studies. The ASCR provided me with the space and network, as did Resistencia/RSA, to maintain linkages to my academic and political work that the university could not provide while I was fully employed.

Callahan, like RSalinas and the Guajardos, represents the same intellectual and activist ethos that always puts the community first before academia and his own work. As part of their solidarity with the communities they serve, they unselfishly develop academic skills to serve others. Their stories underscore an ethic of intellectual practice that serves collective development of their communities at the expense of personal or careerist motives. When I fist met Callahan in the mid 1990s as a graduate student in History at UT Austin, he was engaged in local and transnational politics organizing the local *Accion Zapatista* chapter in support of the EZLN and Zapatismo social movement in Mexico.

Like others engaged in merging transnational work with local struggles in East Austin and on the UT campus, Callahan saw these projects as addressing the local incarnation of globalization as Prakash and Esteva call them (1998). This intellectual project also rejects forms of political organizing based on old leftist models of organizing. Following the work of the EZLN and Zapatista, local activists like Callahan worked to create decentralized organizational models that were more dynamic and situational. This organizational practice would also inform the work of the ASCR in furthering graduate student development that opposed the traditional graduate apprenticeship model of professionalization that dominated at UT and other postsecondary institutions. Callahan's work with AZ and with the ASCR provided me and other graduate students on the UT campus with a model of intellectual development that could help me negotiate the worlds of academic and community activist work that I sought in specific ways, namely: how to bridge academic and community concerns; how to theorize and practice organic intellectualism in new more emancipatory ways; and how to push the boundaries of epistemological authority and effectively practice it in my research and teaching, in ways that resonated with Salinas and Guajardo's work as well.

ASCR social cultural context

Just as in the K-12 schooling system, we see a similar dynamic of micro aggressions and forces associated with advanced postmodernity faced by educators with the Resistencia/RSA and LGC spaces. AGomez, a consultant at the ASCR and the RSA, for example, had first articulated this social and political process as *low intensity war* that described the general state of affairs for working class Mexicano/Chicana/o and other subaltern communities. This condition of warfare that Gomez described had also

colonial dimensions as result of the legacy of settler colonialism that characterized the Anglo and Mexicana/o social relations since the mid 19th century, a history that I traced in Chapter 2 of this study. The focus of this contextualization for my study is how this warfare is played out specifically in the case of universities and schools where forms of state violence are expressed in various oppressions based on race, gender, sex, class and heteronormativity.

A particularly important aspect of that low intensity war in educational spaces is the "epistemological violence in the construction of histories and the production of knowledge" as Gomez-Barris notes (2009, p. 163). In the universities, the contours of positional war for minority scholars are fought out, as one example, in the battle over ethnic studies programs and their legitimacy as fields of study as I discuss more fully below. This right wing assault had become especially acute in the early 1990s when affirmative action came under assault on university campuses. At UT Austin, administrators quickly acquiesced to the Hopwood legal challenge in 1992 rather than fight it. Chicana/o and other subaltern minority groups were grappling with the effects of a post affirmative action political environment on university campuses and school systems. After Hopwood was passed in Texas and proposition 209 in California, these two significant events signaled a period of retrenchment where activists began exploring possible responses and strategies of organizing, creating and maintaining access to institutional resources. In this political environment, Chicana/o activist across the country including UT student and community activists here began looking inward, towards a renewed Chicanisma/o that included a critical reexamination of Chicana/o studies programs, and outward towards decolonial and indigenous movements as they were occurring in Mexico and elsewhere in the world.

ASCR consultants began examining the role of ethnic studies programs on campuses in general, and ethnic studies as a useful critical paradigm that represented real political change and empowerment beyond representational critique. This new Chicanisma/o, as proposed by some consultants, especially challenged the field of Ethnic Studies for abandoning important provisions in *El Plan de Santa Barbara*, the founding manifesto for Chicana/o studies programs in the 1970s. Most importantly, these participants sought a reframing of institutional practices of these programs that grounded all Chicana/o academic production the community as it had originally intended (MGuajardo interview, 4/2010; MCallahan interview, 3/2010). ASCR critique anticipated the current movement among radical academics that call for more critical ethnic studies departments and programs that directly challenge the corporatization of the university that is currently under way driven by neoliberal federal and state educational policies.

Throughout the 1990s, challenges from a number of undergraduate and graduate student groups, like MEChA and CLGSA, charged that Chicana/o studies programs had veered from the founding vision of *El Plan de SB* and collectively called for a return to community-focused research and community participation in advisory committees that oversee these departments. Participants in the ASCR similarly critique the legitimation of Mexican American studies programs at UT Austin as distancing them from the very social movements that helped to launch ethnic studies programs in the first place. They found the university unsupportive and situated their critique based on an interrogation of the university as an ideological site becoming enmeshed with governmental and corporate structures. These challenges to the epistemological authority of ethnic studies programs that ASCR members first articulated in the mid 1990s has coalesced into a

movement and network of scholars and organizations who recently convened at UC Riverside in 2010.

It was in this local context as well as the macro and transnational context represented by the NAFTA passage in 1994 that new social movements like the EZLN and Zapatismo emerged in response. APSB and ASCR participants had already begun linking with local, national and international network of *Accion Zapatista* chapters that supported the EZLN and Zapatistas social movements in Mexico.

Postmodernity and LIW in higher education

In my interviews and earlier conversations with ASCR members over the years, we discussed our experiences as graduate students at the University of Texas that describe processes of *low intensity war*. AGomez for example shared the experiences of MCallahan, a fellow ASCR member who at the time was in the midst of a tenure battle.

> So, last year, in Santa Barbara, they had the 40th anniversary of Chicano Studies, *el Plan de Santa Barbara*. Manolo (Callahan) was teaching there after having gone through a tenure battle that he's still dealing with as a result of what he was probably trying to implement as a result of the experience he had in graduate school, part of the Advanced Seminar and some of these other spaces. So, it was low-intensity warfare, that was the focus (AGomez interview, 6/2010).

While Gomez refers to a post ASCR experience here, ASCR participants in the 1990s had already begun to critique the "conservatism of professionalization, … alienating apprenticeship associated with the guild system," and "hierarchies of academic relations" (Bahl and Callahan, 1998; p. 2). Instead of a "unique site for the flourishing of unalienated labor," the academy functions according to Bahl and Callahan as "an intolerably alienating experience" and an institutional culture that is constituted by "bourgeois values and by dominant relations of race, gender, and class" (p. 3).

The framed their critique of the university as a contested site or sector linked to other sectors of civil society in global capital's contemporary formation tied to postmodernity and the neoliberal structural readjustment that most negatively impacts working class communities of color (Bahl and Callahan, 1998, p. 6). Williams (1977) refers to this process as part of the selective tradition of dominant culture that maintains its epistemological authority institutionally through schooling and academic discursive and material practices. In this context, graduate students confront hierarchical social relations in the university specifically with regard to the graduate apprenticeship process of academic training.

ASCR challenged the rules and norms of graduate training in their academic programs. They challenged the academy's apprenticeship process in general but focused their critique on how this process had been replicated in ethnic studies programs where many of these scholars were in training. They argued that ethnic departments had become institutionalized over the past thirty years since their founding in the 1960s and 1970s social movements.

Gendered forms of postmodernity and LIW

VMartinez and LRosas described their experience of LIW as "a silencing" of certain voices, their own as well as feminist scholarship that was often devalued and delegitimized (VMartinez and LRosas interviews, 3/2010). Both pointed to the ASCR as refuges and safe spaces to articulate these feelings. As they describe, "it was the space that allowed me to talk about that and validated what I was feeling" ... and "served as the place where I could get mentorship and guidance that I needed" (VMartinez, CSalinas, LRosas interviews, 3/2010). ASCR participants identified different components of that

disciplining process that span the gamut from the dictates of traditional research processes and legitimate objects of study, disciplinary field constraints, and what constitutes legitimate knowledge production. These ontological and epistemological battles over legitimate and valid theoretical research practices and pedagogies became a focal point of discussion in the ASCR.

Another ASCR member, LRosas, described being traumatized by history faculty who openly devalued many female graduate students' work as feminist scholars. These graduate students also shared common concerns among activist faculty of color who are frequently expected to meet higher standards that often leads to increased anxiety as a result of these higher expectations: "We start to buy into the idea that our work has to be much better, ten times better, no even 100 times better" (Callahan interview, 3/2010). This "super scholar" syndrome (Callahan interview, 3/2010) is aptly described by LRosas who shares her experiences in graduate school. This experience underscores how certain fields of studies are summarily dismissed:

> I was really excited [about the UT history department] because there were so many other Chicanos and Chicanas but I was really young. I was like 23. I was young I didn't know anyone else from graduate school at this level so the classes weren't hard to be honest because Reed Classes were harder to be honest so if anything what I wasn't good at was politically knowing how to maneuver myself. I felt frustrated by what I thought was closeted but overt racism and sexism and just dismissal of Chicano history as a field continually by the department. And I get frustrated… and the history department is very traditional. I came in as an Americanist which means I was US centric. That when I connected with the Advanced Seminar in 2001. …(I connected with them because) Well I was lost. So I was trying to re-connect with Chicanos and Chicanas. I isolated myself and a lot of my friends had left so I started going to the meetings and I finally connected with the Chicanos who had come after me but I had kind of not paid attention to, I am ashamed to say. Isa, Veronica, Christina. … I think they had tried to reach out one way or another as Chicano grad students had before them… we were traumatized. The trauma was that our work was never made to feel adequate enough or ready. So there were periods of huge delay and it really speaks to their

> inherent sexism and their work and their inability to mentor properly. … Even inherently as Chicano/a scholars I think we start to buy into the idea that our work has to be so much better. But its not even ten times better. Some times its 100 times better. Its this ridiculous like standard. … (LRosas interview, 3/2010).

Beside specifying the gendered nature of this disciplining process, this passage also underscores another form of disciplining of particular fields of studies. Rosas notes how some faculty devalued their Borderlands work as lacking legitimacy as a warranted field of study and lacking scientific rigor. Hence, Chicana/o scholars are "peripheralized" within their departments because as Soldatenkpo-Guttierrez argues "our scholarship refuses to subscribe to institutional structures and dominant paradigms of knowledge" (2010, p. 419), These processes of acculturation and subordination that are part and parcel of the university's repressive apparatus define intellectual literacy as one size fits all, a contemporary example of Williams' (1977) selective tradition that inculcates the canon in order to reproduce existing social relations (Soldatenko-Guttierrez, 2010).

ASCR as safe space and place

Much like RSA and the LGC and their participants, the ASCR started out as a safe space for graduate student at UT Austin. ASCR participants responded to these conditions they faced at UT by creating an autonomous space where "radical mentoring" becomes the imperative by which to respond "individually and collectively to their own mentorship and the future of their communities" (p. 2). ASCR participants all spoke of both material and symbolic violence they encountered in institutions, either gender-based as described above or racially inflected as reported by all. ASCR graduate students saw UT Austin as representative of another institutional site of struggle where educational practices, knowledge and teaching are increasingly being transformed into marketable

commodities and higher education is beholden to market logic and for-profit universities, and where the graduate apprenticeship process becomes one of its disciplining mechanisms (Callahan interview, 3/2010).

ASCR's creation of a safe space was partly predicated on a politics of refusal to *low intensity war*, according to ASCR participants. This meant refusal to the institutional practices of capitalist globalization and neoliberal logic as they were being articulated within the university in general and specifically in terms of their marginalization as Chicana/o activist graduate students. MCallahan situates ASCR's work partly within the tradition of Chicana/o movement politics and activists' refusal to assimilationist and accommodationist strategies that were the dominant political practices in the 1940s and 1950s.

> So we were very conscious of knowledge production and trying to understand the emergence of a *Chicano public intellectual epistemology*, meaning a reading of how that authority is constructed and then ultimately, oppositional sites of that authority. That has always been a Chicano project, in other words, that's the *mens rea* of Chicanismo. Chicanismo as a social movement was designed as a movement of refusal, initially, as a politics of refusal, to refuse assimilation and accommodation. So, we very much saw ourselves in a Chicano idiom, imagining the advanced seminar as a critique of the production of a particular Chicano narrative that moved away from our own experience of Chicanismo, a refusal around accommodation and assimilation (MCallahan interview, 3/2010).

This critical legacy of the Chicana/o movement that rejects the culturally assimilationist educational project of Americanization and the content and form that public education for Mexicano and African American students takes in K-16 schooling. Underpinning this project is an ideological attack on all things Mexican: language, culture, and country of origin (Valenzuela, 1999; Noguera, 2007; Urrieta, 2008) and is further manifested via federal mandates for accountability like NCLB 2001 that

emphasize standardized testing and pedagogies and not critical and culturally relevant instruction.

ASCR networking

ASCR educators employed indigenous and decolonial strategies and tools, *coyunturas*, *talleres and encuentros*, to build more democratic, convivial, forms of collective practice in their intellectual and political work in the university and east Austin communities. They organized *encuentros* in East Austin, for example, modeled on Zapatista *coyuntural* praxis that sought to link students, community activists and organizations in struggle. This model of engagement and solidarity work went beyond traditional leftist organizational models envisioned as more dynamic and loosely configured councils of participation and membership. ASCR participants also developed national and transnational networks with other campuses and community groups like *Accion Zapatista* that were linked to emerging social movements in Mexico and a growing US network that supported this nascent movement, inspired by the theories and practices of these indigenous and decolonial social movements. Like the RSA and LGC participants form of networking, they articulated an organizational and solidarity model that was dialectical and dialogical, local and transnational, dynamic and situated.

In the following section, I present the more specific forms that these new political projects take by focusing on their pedagogical practice. I focus on participant pedagogy, knowledge production and narrative practices in these spaces. I examine how participants use cultural artifacts and practices as pedagogical tools to enact collective identity and produce alternative knowledges using subaltern epistemologies. I argue that, using critical and place-based approaches in their teaching and learning, participants in these

spaces are reframing pedagogy in new and radical ways to produce new forms of knowledge and enact new forms of individual and collective identity practices for educational and social change.

2) EXPRESSIONS OF POSTMODERN CHICANA/O PEDAGOGICAL PRAXIS

> When working at the university, we find ourselves searching for a new language and concepts that represent and describe our research agenda. …because the work (we do) and that of our community partners follows a different set of rules that crosses boundaries, which includes disciplines, methodologies, and epistemologies. The distinguishing characteristic is its collaborative quality, so it is no surprise that the best and easiest place to articulate the work our partners and we do is at the *kitchen table*, where the power is balanced and the conversations are organic (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2010, p. 35).

This section examines more closely the nexus between cultural production and formation of individual and collective subjectivities and identities. I consider especially how pedagogical praxis as a form of cultural production shapes the individual and collective *habitus* of participants in these spaces, and builds cultural and social capital that reflects distinct ways of knowing and being (Levinson and Holland, 1996, p. 21). Critical pedagogy in these sites reflects a subaltern epistemological practice based on lived experiences and local community knowledges and not on some abstract sense of education that is removed from students' daily, lived experiences. As the Guajardos suggest above, their educational work is situated around the kitchen table, in the homes and neighborhoods where students live. Their form of critical pedagogy is rooted in informal spaces of learning and tied to lived experiences that are frequently defined by a daily struggle to survive. Their praxis-based critical pedagogy responds to and is

constituted by larger movement discourses and struggles, namely the Chicana/o movement and other national and transnational struggles that have come to define their CLE work. Drawing from local cultural and social capital and funds of knowledge, these consultants are transforming their communities and schools using local social and cultural artifacts to build agency (Moll et al, 1992; Spener, 2009).

The following questions orient my analysis for this section: How does Chicana/o and place-based pedagogy (LGC), pinto pedagogy/pedagogy of dissent (RSA/SOY) and insurgent learning and conviviality (ASCR) reframe *habitus* and produce agency in these spaces? What are the salient features of this agency in terms of identity formation and knowledge production particularly as cultural and political expressions of *Chicanismo* and social movement discourse and non-discursive practices? Using epistemes of struggle to inform their pedagogy, educators are creating sites where pedagogy and knowledge praxis shape the formation of political subjectivities.

A subtheme of the theme of pedagogy and knowledge production that emerged from my data analysis was the importance of story and narrative. I describe these practices as forms of cultural production to underscore the agentic aspect of this educational work. Keeping in mind how cultural production "indexes the dialectic of structure and agency" (Levinson and Holland, 1996; p. 14), I argue that narrative and story are cultural forms produced by participants in these educational spaces. In these spaces, storytelling serves a pedagogic function linked to cultural histories and to the development of individual and collective identity. Using an archive of over two hundred personal stories of community elders collected by youth, LGC educators have integrated narratives into their curriculum. The narratives become supplementary testaments to the textbook histories of Texas. Stories function, on the one hand, as alternative

historiography by reconstructing dominant histories of South Texas and, at the same time, they capture and document contemporary ongoing social action at a variety of scales. In his article on the relationship between community and identity formation, Revill (1993) explains how identity forms from our engagement with place which stories can foment:

> "Storytelling is an important means by which we make sense of the world, appropriating our environment and finding a location in it. These senses of belonging and notions of identity develop from an engagement with the world inseparably, both material and imaginal" (p. 212). If used to counter received and dominant histories and experiences, they can function as counterstories or counternarratives that offer resistive possibilities for these communities as many CRT and LatCrit scholars contend (Delgado 2001, Ladson-Billings and Tate, 2006).

For educators in these educational spaces, these forms of critical pedagogy were based on both local Chicana/o and transnational-based epistemologies and ontologies (Guajardo, Callahan, Salinas, Mendoza interviews). LGC's place-based pedagogy, for example, is rooted in teaching and learning practices produced by students and community rather than federal and state imposed curricular content and form. ASCR's pedagogy is informed by the critical theories of Paulo Freire and Zapatismo pedagogies. RSA participants use a radical cultural arts curriculum and pedagogy described by one participant as a *pedagogy of dissent* (Gomez, 2008).

In these epistemic political spaces or figured worlds of Chicana/o activism, educators imagine and develop more democratic and participatory forms of teaching and learning by using discourses and iconography borrowed from national and transnational social movements that inform an expanded notion of education beyond the classroom. Not only are these epistemologies of Chicana/o thought based on the unique experiences of these communities, but participants also endeavor to reinscribe them in the context of

larger material struggles. Underlying this pedagogy are theories and practices based on the notion of *epistemology of place* that include "the content of both the implicit and explicit knowledge of the community's history, geography, lineage and the struggles" that define social relationships based on political and economic power (Nee-Benham 2011, p. 52). This epistemological perspective forms the basis of place-based literacy and education projects in these sites, but always in the context of a larger social and historical dynamic of struggle. According to Nee-Benham, "If knowledge of place is not integrated into one's work, action has no meaning or purpose" (p. 52).

Place-based Pedagogy in the Reappropriation of Space and Place: The Llano Grande Center

> "Aqui vine a conocer el talache, la hacha, y el machete, todos cuando comenze el desenraiz" (Isabel Gutierrez, Community Elder).

Francisco Guajardo and the Llano Grande Fellows (LGC graduates who have returned to work in the Center) describe the origins of the LGC and how their place-based praxis functioned as a key cultural artifact to mediate both the meaning of oppression and struggles against it, in order to enact social and political change:

> The Llano Grande Center … facilitated the process of dozens of emerging youth leaders to participate in meaningful civic-engagement work. The work of the Center took shape in the early 1990s as a youth leadership and community-development organization. On both its iterations (college prep and youth and community development), it was guided by a sense of place—a clear notion that there was something unique and rich about this rural South Texas community. Whereas conventional indicators showed the community as impoverished and lacking in opportunity, the teachers and students who founded the Llano Grande Center believed in the redeeming qualities of their hometown and its people. (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2011, p. 74).

This practice of place-based pedagogy using story and storytelling has the power to reform subjectivities and identity for students and community. Using local popular understandings as epistemological resources enables participants to transform discursive and material conditions. Combining two forms of social practice of embodied memory, inscribed and incorporated, they have produced a subaltern history of the valley previously untold (see Llano Grande Center website at http://www.llanogrande.org for a sample of over two hundred narratives that LGC students have digitized and archived). The following passage describes one student who was impacted by the sharing of her personal story and who became emblematic of the transformative powers of storytelling. The Guajardos captured her personal and political transformation in a recently published article that describes the storytelling process and how Carmen, as representative of hundreds of other students, has become a change agent for her community.

> A second reason for putting ourselves in the middle of the text and work is that we role model the inquiry process as an instrument for change. This is important for educational leaders, teachers, students, and community partners as they become researchers in their own right, much like Carmen has become an activist–researcher. As we use the research process to author ourselves, we see young people in the community learning these skills. The ability to author oneself is a complex process that yields great power for our partners. As youth become researchers and creators of knowledge, they then gain richer learning experiences, and they generate power as they position themselves for life after high school. When they apply to college, for example, they apply as experienced community-based researchers who, as in the case of Carmen, play important roles as agents for social and community change (Guajardo, Guajardo and Casaperalta, 2008, p. 8).

As community based researchers, LGC students have collected over two hundred digitized video and audio narratives of their grandparents, parents and community elders

that capture the history of the delta region in South Texas in the early 20th century. These stories have been digitally archived and have also been collected in a series of published journals called the *Llano Grande Journal*. One of their first journals, titled "Desenraizando el Valle," provided dozens of personal narratives of Mexicana/os who participated in the clearing of brush, mesquite and cactus for the eventual plantation development of citrus farms. Over the span of ten years, Mexicana/o laborers cleared hundreds of acres of South Texas land transformed it into the "Magic Valley" as it was called by land speculators at the time, eager to lure capital investment. They narrate a collective history of socioeconomic and cultural transformation heretofore never captured in history textbooks (Llano Grande Journal, Winter 1997).

More recently, LGC youth have led action research projects that provided data for grant funded projects that were used for economic development projects and for the building of new schools. Youth are provided a space where they can "reauthor" themselves as activist researchers and active citizens quite distinct from how they have been previously positioned by schooling institutions and media. Gomez-Barris (2009) describes how the process of cultural memory enabled by educators uses particular cultural artifacts to give collective salience to personal memories. According to Irwin-Zarecka (1994) who Gomez-Barris quotes, "collective memory—as a set of ideas, images, feelings about the past—is best located not in the minds of individuals, but in the resources they share" (2009, p. 7).

CSalinas describes how storytelling has also enabled the building of community generationally by providing the tool that links students with their parents and grandparents. "I was really fascinated by this oral history project and I thought it was so important because it connected generations, the way the class was structured. It was a

project to interview older people in the community" (CSalinas interview, 1/2010). This interaction between generations has brought this community together by connecting youth and grandparents. Youth who had previously been unable to communicate in Spanish with their elders now saw a reason to relearn their home language and this translated to a renewal of interest in rediscovering their culture and history.

Students who had previously been understandably uninterested in traditional textbook histories of Texas and the US were provided a new way to enact and engage in studying history. History was made less abstract and more real via this new way of teaching and learning. Capturing the personal stories of their family and community members made them engaged learners rather than alienated by banking instruction. Students were also empowered by their new role as researchers and published authors of these digitized narratives. The archived stories of their family and community elders are part of the LGC school curriculum that legitimizes their family and community histories and experiences as "real history" and repositions these students as agentic producers of that history besides providing a missing perspective from traditional historiography. "It was a way not just to acknowledge that history," says CSalinas,

> but to legitimize it in the institution of the school. It was an extremely important process and not only are the high schoolers learning the history and claiming the story that's theirs, and that its legitimized as real history, they are also knowledge producers of that history. That whole thing for me was extremely powerful, and the ideas of that class were transformative for me. It was extremely horizontal, everyone was involved in this process of creating these pieces (CSalinas interview, 1/2010).

This new sense of agency for LGC youth enabled them to reauthor themselves on multiple levels, transforming them into academic leaders who now attend some of the

best universities in the country. Since the LGC has instituted a pedagogy of place, students have entered colleges at unprecedented rates and are regularly accepted into Ivy League schools. The oral history class and digital storytelling project provide these youth with tools for the building of relationships; familial and intergenerational for sure, but also between members of the community and now is used by LGC youth to create networks to other places in the US and other countries. The digital storytelling project created in the late 1990s to capture their family stories has enabled students to now travel the world training other marginalized communities in the power of digital storytelling to educate, transform and enact community change.

This idea of place-based practices is more fully articulated in a series of articles that M. and PGuajardo have published in the last few years (2004, 2008). PGuajardo speaks about the importance of reconfiguring the language of *Chicanismo* by recognizing its origins in the Mexicano community but also by creating a discourse that is inclusive and non-alienating and fosters community building beyond the LGC community. Chicano based pedagogy becomes first transformed into place based pedagogy, then reconfigured into a "Gracious Space" attentive to local conditions and constituent communities. In the following passage, PGuajardo explains how reframing discourse in the context of local struggles informs their dynamic and situated practice.

> Yeah because *platica* has its own power. The concept of *"platica,"* right? But how do you take *platica* into a different cultural space? It's much more formal, ya know, a different space where people come in from different walks of life so what can you call it? you can't call it Chicanismo, you have to call it "pedagogy of place." You can't call it "platica" you have to call it "Gracious Space." So this is about the negotiation of the political or the negotiation of the cultural, which is an intensely political act. So it's reshaping and redefining all these concepts through which we can understand each other (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010).

Gracious Space is an extension of place-based praxis that embodies the LGC work of the past fifteen years. In this new space, LGC founders are building an extensive network across the U.S. and beyond. Integrating their work with other national and transnational communities, this new cultural and political network has continued to shape political subjectivities based on the social locations of people to build community. This passage also alludes to another important theme that cuts across all three sites: *platica* or the power of story and storytelling as basis for research, for pedagogy and for creating individual and collective power.

For the LGC *platica* or story/storytelling is perhaps the principal cultural artifact and tool employed in their political work and pedagogical practice. On the one hand, PGuajardo notes how these practices are based on local epistemologies and ontologies and have always been foundational for the sharing and building of local knowledges in Mexicana/o communities. They are part of a Mexicana/o expressive culture, a narrative tradition that was reliant on *cuentos* and *corridos* to pass on, document and respond to lived experiences, in many cases also serving to counter received representations of this community (Limon, 1994). Story or *platica* becomes reconfigured and reconstituted as *pedagogy of place* by LGC founders, a point that DPerez had underscored earlier regarding the need for changing discourses responsive to local forces and processes.

At the LGC, *platica* and storytelling are parts of an array of cultural artifacts that make up their place-based pedagogy as the following passages illustrate. About six or seven years after the first college trips to Ivy Leagues schools, they received their first grant from the Annenburg Rural Challenge in partnership with the school district. DPerez explains that the "the purpose of that grant was it to create place-based pedagogy, to institutionalize place based pedagogy district wide" (DPerez interview, 5/2010). The

grant included two school districts, Edcouch Elsa and neighboring Ladilla ISD. This was her first year back from college after she had been invited to teach at the LGC by PGuajardo. DPerez explains that place based pedagogy meant incorporating it into all curricular subjects. She noted that instituting this new form of teaching was challenging given the current context of schooling and the limits of her teacher training:

> I mean it was very hard and it was a struggle so when I came back in '97 to teach here I did so because I knew Llano Grande was starting and I was thinking first of going to teach in San Antonio. But then I thought that no I want to come back home. You know there is a new project that is going to start and it can be a really new exciting opportunity to partner a young teacher with Llano Grande. So I began doing a lot of this place based pedagogy out of my history class with my 7th graders…. Nobody handed us a manual. I mean nobody had a manual. We had conversations with the people from Rural Challenge, and we began to have conversations amongst ourselves about what this could look like here. I mean it was very grass roots. A lot of teachers were participating in these conversations, students as young as elementary school kids were having these conversations about how to learn about your place. And so I began doing this in my history classes and having students interview elders in the community to get a perspective of 20th century history. I was supposed to teach world history but you know we could only capitalize on the elders in the 20th century (DPerez interview, 5/2010).

DPerez underscores the situational and grounded nature of their place-based approach in which the specific pedagogical practices were based on a collective and collaborative process of action and reflection. She also describes changing student habitus in the process. According to her, the change in student attitudes was transformative and empowering in terms of their relationship to the study of history and to their community:

> And it was really interesting to see the attitudes that students had. In the very beginning of the year, you know they are like "I hate history, history is boring. All you do is read the chapters and answer the questions in the back of the book" and "I cant wait to get out of this one horse town there is nothing here for me." I mean just very fatalistic attitudes. You know we began going to adult day care centers, interviewing elders. You know writing their life stories. Students were

> understanding that you could learn history in different ways beyond the textbook experience they had. And they began to see that it was this living and breathing discipline all around them. You know by the end of the year, their attitudes were a complete 180. You know they were like "wow I never knew that you could study history this way. I never knew I could create history and tell it from my own experiences I cant wait to go to college but come back here and do more of this type of work (DPerez interview, 5/2010).

The experience was also transformative for DPerez as well in terms of her teaching practices. Textbook history was predicated on silence, an absence of the figure of the Mexicano that had been relegated to the margins of history. This new historiography based on capturing the stories of their elders uncovered this repressed knowledge of the realities of South Texas life for Mexicanos. This new historical consciousness had been awakened in her earlier as a member of MEChA, the Chicana/o student organization at Brown University.

> I was part of MEChA when I was there. And so coming back, my lens was a little bit shifted sort of from the national identity politics to the concept of Chicanismo. You know I was a little softer. Because we were now looking at place based identity and there are some issues. You know we were still talking about decolonization and retelling our own histories and recapturing our power. But the language was softer than what I had been used to in college right. But it was still very similar work (DPerez interview, 5/2010).

For DPerez, place-based pedagogy meant the active coupling and merging of macro politics of Chicanismo that she practiced at Brown with the micro social and political realities of her community and her teaching practices. Her negotiation of political and pedagogical practice locally situated was vital to her success in the classroom. Another aspect of this new historiography was the digital storytelling project that became a major curricular component of place-based teaching, taking learning outside the space of the classroom and into the local community.

One of the LGC's first initiatives was the digital storytelling project that became part of locally produced curriculum, oral history methods research and digital production classes. The experiences of creating their own curriculum and courses based on narratives of their family and community elders changed student perspectives and attitudes about their community. As these personal histories became part of their curriculum, they began to learn in a new way. Besides providing them with an opportunity to reconnect with their family and community elders, it also promoted a sense of pride about themselves fueled by a (re)visioning of their local history and their place in the making of South Texas as DPerez explains.

> And so, just from that one content discipline of history I mean students, minds were completely broadened about what it meant to be a student. What it meant to create your own knowledge .To create a public discourse about your own community and history. And they had a strong sense of their own identity who they were and who they came from (DPerez interview, 5/2010).

LGC builds social capital and produces knowledge using multiple resources to create a public pedagogy that moves outside the formal classroom space. DPerez underscores the public nature of this activist work that requires creating a public discourse based on the production of this new knowledge. This sense of collective subject and project recognizes the importance of public intellectualism, as well as a revisioning of the nature of academic work and of the power of new discourse and counter narratives to dominant historiography of South Texas. There is also the recognition that organizational power is built not just on a radical ideology, but also on a place-based politic based in local and autochthonous discourses that require continuous negotiation and dialogue of between youth and elder, and which is both personal and collective. These new literacies come together to transform and empower students to become critical thinkers and engaged active learners.

These two hundred digitized stories collected by LGC youth have not simply been used as tools to document personal stories but they also serve as organizing tools by participants. In fact, they have been used to facilitate changes within the students' school curriculum and used to enact changes in their communities. These digital stories of their parents' and grandparents' experiences in South Texas are forms of cultural production in which there is a "creative use of discourse, meanings, materials, practices, and group processes to explore, understand, and creatively occupy particular positions in sets of material possibilities" (Willis, 1981, p. 59).

One recent example in 2006 where digital storytelling was successfully used as an organizing tool by youth involved a $21 million dollar bond package to build new schools in the Edcouch Elsa HS. The superintendent of schools approached the LGC because of his familiarity with their past history of civic engagement and success in organizing similar community outreach and civic campaigns; they had previously advocated for local park improvements and candidate forums in early 2000. LGC students led the public information campaign to successfully secure the needed votes for passage. Students produced a digital story that explained the bond issue and its importance and shared it in community forums. As student organizers explained, "We know how to teach people through digital stories. We've done it before, and we can use one to help people understand bonds, and we practiced how to put out a clear message" (FGuajardo and Llano Grande Fellows, quoted in Nee Benham, 2011, p. 76).

Storytelling also becomes the framework and methodology for LGC participants through which to reconstruct their local history, a powerful expression of resistance and hope against the prevailing deficit discourses that define and shape individual and collective Mexicano identity. The power of self-representation for enabling empowering

identities is well documented but seeing the educational and social changes on this community since the founding of the LGC is proof enough of its positive effects. This is particularly important for LGC members since so much of their local history has been elided in traditional historiography of the delta region of South Texas. The two hundred or so digital narratives that capture the socioeconomic transformation of the region describe this transformation powerfully captured by the title of one of the LGC newsletters, *Desenraizando el Valle* written by local high school students and teachers at Edcouch Elsa High School.

Pinto Pedagogy and Poetry as Praxis: Red Salmon Arts/Save Our Youth

> I came to a conclusion personally and through my studying and my friends that poetry can heal. Poetry is very healing, poetry is very liberating and poetry is very empowering, plus it's accessible. So I used that as my mantra*;* first it's an awakening, then it's an empowerment, a means of empowerment, it's your writing, you have to live with it. Just trying to get them to express themselves and open up and once they have this confidence, which is this empowerment, then they are starting to be free. Its liberating because once you blow it open, poetry, you can use it for anything, to indict, to educate, to entertain. And we made known very clearly that once you liberated yourself from all those hang-ups, then the healing process starts. So I moved on that because that's what helped me out. I'm convinced that it works, when they see their own writing, no matter how hard-assed they are, once they see their writing and you give them props, that's what they need. Just a little, you know. …So we began to do the workshops, early '90s. '92 we were doing workshops and we decided we would start adding art, whenever we could. And we would add music whenever we could, but poetry would be the central energy carrier (RSalinas interview2, 10/2007).

The kinds of pedagogical practices in the LGC described above resonate with those of educators at the RSA. The curriculum that drives their SOY poetry workshops is less prescriptive than traditional teaching and learning and more student-centered, relying

upon youth knowledge as a legitimate epistemological resource and basis for learning. The pedagogical practices of the LGC and RSA are both forms of liberatory education that links classroom learning in the context of larger frames of education and learning; local familial and community narratives form the epistemological foundation for their critical pedagogy for LGC consultants, similarly narrative poetry becomes the tools and episteme for their educational praxis for RSA/Resistencia consultants. Watching Raul Salinas work with youth in one of his SOY poetry workshops is to marvel at how he engages youth almost effortlessly using poetry and writing. LRosas notes how Raul connects with youth relationally by focusing on the personal, using story to initially engage them:

> But he sounded different because he was asking different things. What I found impressive was that he would always start with a personal. What is your story what is your narrative? Who are your ancestors.? And for Burnett it was mostly Mexicano, Chicano, but it was white too. And they didn't know, and it didn't matter. It was always the same. We all have a story and we all come from some where. So he would get them to work on their personal biographies, whereas before he didn't even get them to start doing poetry. To validate them on this matter (LRosas interview, 3/2010).

Even before he engaged them with poetry, Raul established a personal relationship with youth, many of whom have been institutionalized for many years either in the criminal justice system or in working class barrio or ghetto schools that generally suffer from a lack of material and symbolic resources. He worked to create a safe space that acknowledges their person and their history that is genuinely caring. From its inception in 1992, SOY has worked with thousands of mostly African American and Latino/a youth who have disengaged from institutionalized education, pushed out by an uncaring environment in their schools.

These youth are part of the thousands of youth pushed out of our public school systems due to our flawed educational system, exacerbated lately by federal policies which put the onus of accountability on teachers rather than states and federal agencies to address this problem (Noguera, 2003; Kozol, 2005; Valenzuela, 2005). According to De Lissovoy and McLaren (2003), students are marked as failures by a system of educational assessment and credentialing that "is part of a discourse that systematically excludes children of color from the privileges of achievement" (p. 37). The SOY project directly confronts the failure of the educational system that puts many of these students down the path of criminalization because their lack of education limits choices. The SOY project enacts an educational program that contests the current criminalization of youth using liberatory teaching and a "curriculum of engagement" that uses both the artifacts of popular youth culture and narrative poetry to contest the schools and media representations of working class student of color.

However, these aren't scripted workshops sessions but a process of relationship building and centering youth concerns. This relationship is later nurtured using poetry and writing that scaffolds student knowledge that becomes the basis for writing about their lives and producing poetry in these workshop sessions. Raul and other SOY facilitators' approach to poetry writing is grounded in life histories of youth participants that captures their social and cultural experiences. When he engages youth he does so as equals and artists an approach that underscores the importance of pedagogy that builds relational knowledge or trust between teacher and student. This is a disruption of traditional classroom practices in which teachers do the teaching and students do the learning. In this space, students become teachers and teachers become students. While RSalinas and facilitators come with prepared curriculum, it is rarely offered

prescriptively and instead teaching and learning are a collective process that borrows from theories and practices of critical pedagogy. The following excerpt illustrates this point:

> I just go in and talk to them. If it's in a jail or on the Rez, or an alt school, what's happening, what's the issues, what the problem? Cant write, cant spell, that ain't nothing, blah blah blah. Very open style and approach, utilizing everything to your availability, whatever comes out of your pockets will work. I just talk to them, I guess they just feel something, a kinship. I talk to prisoners, I talk to young girls who hate their moms, their moms are on drugs, I forget they are children and that their moms and dads are usually younger than me. I meet some of them and its really sad, same old story with no happy ending but some of them turn it around and make it a happy ending. And then when I see them later, that is when I feel real good, it inspires me when I see them again. Of course not all of them are happy endings, but if we can get just one, that's enough (RSalinas interview, 10/2007).

Relational knowledge concerns the building and maintenance of relationships, which is the first step in working with youth. This relationship building is the foundation upon which learning occurs and is key to building sustained relationships with youth. Valenzuela (1999) describes how the basis of effective teaching of youth requires caring relationships between teachers and youth that may take many months to develop depending on the youths' previous relationship to schooling. Unless critical relationship building forms the foundation of learning and pedagogy practice, students will not engage in the learning process. Nee-Benham et al (2011) have found that power within individuals and organizations is built on relationships that are "both facilitative (forward moving) and caring (loving)," based on trust and reciprocity. "In the end", they say, "we are reminded that the human story is a narrative of relationships" (p. 15).

AGomez traces RSalinas' critical pedagogy to the educational work he did in federal prisons and hence has referred most recently to his teaching as *pinto* pedagogy.

The same teaching dynamics that RSalinas creates in these workshops find their origins in the prison classes begun by movement activists at Leavenworth. Classes in prison were "dynamic and non-traditional" according to AGomez and while led by visiting professors and community activists, the focus was student centered. Prisoners were actively engaged in the learning process. Students in these prison classes drove the curriculum of the first class in 1970, titled ''Cultural History of the Southwest". This was a diverse class of prisoners reflecting the composition of the prison population at Leavenworth that housed many activists of color from new social movements that had erupted in the late 1960's over poor social conditions in the urban ghettos and barrios.

LMendoza also traces SOY pedagogy to RSalinas' earlier work in Leavenworth and Marion federal prisons where critically informed pedagogy was the rule and the basis for RSalinas' personal and political transformation from street hood to Chicano activist. His experiences translate easily with the youth he works with since many are caught up in the criminal justice system. Mendoza explains that writing and poetry provided RSalinas with the tools to survive in federal prisons and to examine his life and the world around him to then better understand how to transform himself from hood to youth educator:

> He could help young people understand that by becoming political, by gaining access to their voice, to be proud of who they were, to regain their sense of identity, that they could make more deliberate choices on what kind of behavior they engaged in and make them less at risk to get caught up in the web of the prison industrial complex. I think he's always critical of the prison industrial complex and how it becomes more and more about punishment rather than reform of people and I think he was also focused on youth development, youth leadership, and youth empowerment because he wanted young people to be smarter about how they understood the world around them and the choices they made (LMendoza interview, 2/2010).

LMendoza suggests that RSalinas' transformation in the prisons would be replicated at RSA and Resistencia through what would later emerge as the SOY project.

While Salinas wanted to create a space where local poets and writers and community activists could engage and network, his work later became focused on youth leadership development and empowerment. He found on returning to Austin the 1980s that much had not changed in East Austin barrios where he grew up. Schools and neighborhoods in this working class sector of town were still suffering from a lack of resources as had been the case in the 1940s and 50s: "Neighborhood of endless hills, muddied streets--all chuckholed lined--that never dank of asphalt" (Salinas, 1980). He saw a need for the type of education that he had received in the prisons "because he wanted young people to be smarter about how they understood the world around them and the choices they made …" SOY workshops provide the space where youth have "access to their voice, to be proud of who they were, to regain their sense of identity, that they could make more deliberate choices on what kind of behavior they engaged in and make them less at risk to get caught up in the web of the prison industrial complex" as LMendoza describes (LMendoza interview, 2/2010).

Salinas also says that his experiences at Marion and Leavenworth prisons are where he first came to understand the power of poetry as a form of radical cultural praxis for personal and political transformation. This idea that cultural practices can be the basis for education and mobilization continues to inspire SOY educators. In a recent conversation, Salinas explains his why poetry is so effective as a cultural resource for critically inspired teaching that guides SOY work today:

> Poetry is so effective that in most dictatorships, the first to go are the poets. Poetry is a very strong medium of expression and of reaching people. It's utilitarian. It's portable. It's also expedient. We don't have much time. So poetry's my main weapon. … I just do creative writing clinics for marginal communities on alternative campuses and juvenile centers. I do readings, but I get them to read more. It's about empowering them. And so I get them to write, and

> to read. But it's not just writing and reading and writing and poems. It's about life. We make them think. The state decides who's deviant, who's retarded, who's a slow learner, who's a gang banger. They do the classifying. We do the unclassifying. … In my intensive clinics, I bring in the Native ceremonial element, too. So I don't like anyone—principals, guards—to come in and mess with it when I am doing an intensive clinic. I'm always very demanding about being left alone. They aren't going to kidnap me. They aren't going to hurt me. With the youngsters, who might have a short attention span from boredom, or from being badly prepared, poetry is the best medium. We'll get them to tell us—to tell us one word. "Grandma." Good, now tell us another word. "War." Or "poverty." Then we step back and figure out how to make art from it (RSalinas interview in Rubin, 2006).

RValdez adds that poetry's utility is that it is "fast, easy, quick and has a punch and is powerful. And when the students feel that energy, when they feel the inspiration they go and they do it and it's fun. And so that's also what we try to teach is that learning's fun" (RValdez interview, 10/2007). Valdez also underscores how raul works to create a safe space where youth are able to address real concerns about themselves, their families and their communities that begins with relationship building as I described above.

> So just like we create a safe space here, we try to create a safe space in the classrooms and the teacher can be there but we ask the teachers or the guards to lay off a little bit and let us facilitate the circle. If they get out of place, Raul knows how to deal with that. He's dealt with pintos in prisons so it's not like he can't handle these young kids—especially with words. So it's a safe space were young people can finally get what's off their chest. Where they can talk about where they're from: What are their struggles? What is the struggle of your community? What's the struggle of your family? What are the issues that affect you? (RValdez interview, 10/2007).

Centering student experiences and scaffolding writing skills on these experiences develops self-confidence for these youth of color according to Valdez. It also creates a space where learning can actually be fun and engaging rather than rote and repetitive as

much traditional learning has become because of the demands placed on teachers to "teach to the test". Jocson (2006) has written about the power of poetry to develop "writing skills, confidence in learning, self-awareness, and development of social conscience" and the development of strong identities that counters how they are generally positioned in schools and media. Her study of the P4P project, a youth project similar to SOY also uses poetry as a tool for developing critical literacies. In the same way, SOY provides a safe space for youth to evaluate and make sense of their lives:

> The view of poetry presented affirms the importance of students' voices in the writing and learning process. It highlights how acknowledging students' interests in and abilities to produce sophisticated poems can create different possibilities for enhancing students' literacy development. The import of poetry for young people's identities, in particular emergent identities as empowered citizens and writers, examined within the context of P4P advances current perspectives on how poetry can be used for effective writing instruction in and out of schools (Jocson, 2006).

Using Brian Street's model of critical literacy, Jocson sees poetry as a form of "situated social practice" that enables a "powerful way of conceptualizing the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they shape" (Jocson, 2005a retrieved 3/2011 from http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume8/number5). Raul Salinas has also described how he uses story and storytelling in his work with youth. Community stories, *cuentos* in the Chicano/Mexicano community or medicine stories in the Native American community, provide the space for a critical discussion of personal and social realities. At the same time, Salinas helps participants to value their culture and identity, by drawing attention to the empowering figures and messages that emerge. This also suggests that this educational and political space assigns a positive value to the street knowledge that youth

bring to these workshops, in the form of street smarts that are not generally acknowledged in formal classroom contexts.

Like LGC educators, RSalinas and other SOY facilitators tie their pedagogical practice to narrative and storytelling, and to the recovery of Mexicano folk traditions and local epistemes. Salinas' appeal to vernacular oral tradition resonates with the Guajardo's riff on the importance of story and storytelling as key cultural artifacts that served as part of family tradition, as well as a form of education and knowledge production. Raul traces this practice to his grandmother, a *corridista*, and his mother, a voracious reader of stories and novels. For both Raul Salinas and the Guajardos, this vernacular tradition of narrative and storytelling and their concerted effort to recover these local mexicano folk traditions, become the epistemological inspiration for their pedagogical practice.

More recently, RSA/Resistencia has facilitated SOY workshops at Gardner Betts, a medium security youth detention center that houses predominantly young men and women of color. These Black and Brown youth are pushed out of schools and other neighborhood spaces into a "dystopia of prisons, jails, juvenile facilities, immigrant detentions centers," a school-to-prison pipeline defined by race and class (Vargas, 2010, pp. 6-7). Led by facilitators Rene Valdez, Czarina Theben, Joao Vargas, and myself, youth participants discuss, write, perform and publish their poetry providing an avenue for creative expressions rarely found in penal institutions. SOY provides youth with a space to articulate their pain and struggles but also to express their hope for a better future. The space they create through SOY workshops creates a discourse community as Jocson (2006) describes that provides a space to mediate everyday realities and experiences of home, school, and their communities. This community I would add also provides a space for agentic possibilities in an institution where these opportunities are

indeed limited. Positioned as active learners and "social agents in accessing, valuing, and utilizing" poetry, they undergo a reconceptualization of self, a forging of new 'agentive' identities to negotiate their world" (Jocson, 2005a retrieved from http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume8/number5/).

Both RSA/SOY and LGC educators have reframed their pedagogical praxis based on resources and curriculum that are situated in youth and community knowledge as a basis for their liberatory teaching and learning. Education is more broadly framed, where classroom practice inside the institution of schooling is linked to community concerns outside the institution of schooling. In a sense, both have created autonomous and alternative sites of learning based on reframing what knowledge is valid and how knowledge is produced. This has also resulted in reframed senses of identities that represent self in more positive and empowering ways and tied to their local communities' collective struggles. In the following discussion, I turn to the work of the ASCR to understand how links between epistemological and educational praxis is commensurate with LGC and RSA/SOY educator practice, while differing in some fundamental ways.

Insurgent Learning and Convivial Praxis: Advanced Seminar on Chicana/o Research

> Chicano Studies and Ethnic studies have not fully addressed three related concerns, namely the role and recovery of situated knowledge in the community and in the classroom (pedagogy); strategies of engaging situated knowledge in the community through fieldwork and community research; and graduate training and the professionalization of Chicano and Ethnic Studies (knowledge/power) (MCallahan email correspondence, 2008).

If we understand the university as a *site of struggle*, as articulated above by critical theorists, then the work of activist academics within this space takes on a special urgency particularly given our contemporary economic and political environment where the gains of the 1960s and 1970s continue to come under assault. We see this challenge by right wing forces expressed in state and local policies to undermine Ethnic and Multicultural Studies and English Language programs across the country and rising anti-immigrant xenophobia. Implicit in these challenges is an underlying ideology that delegitimizes the value and credibility of subaltern knowledge and research and training of scholars in these nascent and emergent fields of study. Simons and Masshelein (2007) provide a framework for understanding the work of the academy that is useful for elucidating the work of the ASCR. They define the university role in terms of a combination of the following activities: "the production of knowledge (research); the transmission of knowledge (education), and the additional training and regional development (service)" (p. 143).

ASCR participants challenged many of these practices in their teaching and research and political work on university campuses. In the following passage, MCallahan articulates an epistemological analysis of both the institution and its role in knowledge production focused on Chicano studies since most members of the ASCR worked in this field. For ASCR participants as in the LGC and RSA, education praxis is grounded in social justice concerns of the local community, and challenges the university (and in this case the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas) to be more accountable to local Chicana/o communities. The ASCR articulated this challenge to university authority in terms of a pedagogical praxis they named *insurgent learning* and

conviviality. In the following passage, Callahan condenses four modes of praxis into *insurgent learning* and *convivial practice*.

> What this is, is the ASCR very deliberately explored the collective subject, negotiating a *collective pedagogy*, *research,* etc., by taking up four metatheories: coyuntura, cyber cultura, grassroots post-modernism, and Zapatismo. I think those four metatheories and how we negotiate them and how we learn from them, what tools we develop from them. I have condensed in my own political practice, my own political world. I have condensed those four metatheories into *insurgent learning and convivial research*. What I mean by *insurgent learning*, and again, the Zapatistas are a good lens, it's an analytic category to examine where there is political practice that is organized by and through learning. …The learning is at the center of the political structure. That to me is insurgent learning. You don't have to have a system of education and elaborate schooling, this elaborate poli-sci, government, LBJ School. You have people rotating and they learn what it is to govern, what citizenship means, the obligations of community. I see that as insurgent learning, so the ASCR arguably is a site of insurgent learning. We start from the premise, it's a convivial site, we start from the premise that we have the knowledges, the experiences, the resources, the networks to solve our own problems, to articulate, theorize, and solve our own problems through action. We organize ourselves to make that possible. In other words, we're not just critiquing the Center for Mexican American Studies, or critiquing Chicano Studies, we're constructing and living the alternative. We use the language of advanced seminar, but we could have used the language of *ateneo*, or anything (Callahan interview2, 3/2010).

According to MCallahan (3/2010 interview), *insurgent learning* is engaged pedagogical praxis based in the epistemologies and ontologies of local communities, always informed by local histories of those communities and produced in autonomous spaces by activists in political and cultural struggle. *Conviviality* names a process that reframes a vertical vision of authority and leadership into a form of collective and distributed form of authority where members play an active role in developing individual and collective leadership. There is also a reframed sense of academic work and political engagement that is "neither a job nor professions; it is a disposition and way of life" as the Guajardos (2011) have articulated, where participants are "constructing and living the

alternative" (p. 37). Raul Salinas, who lived the struggle, leading the RSA/Resistencia Bookstore until his death in 2008, is an embodiment of *insurgent learning* and *convivial* organizational practice. LRosas who has worked in both the RSA and the ASCR articulates what *insurgent learning* and *convivial* practice looks like in the classroom as she explains here:

> I think about that a lot. I don't like lecturing. I haven't figured out what I would do in a large class yet because I have had the benefit of only having small classes, mostly I have been doing discussions. But as a rule I think its important to always dialogue and I think the closest pedagogical school is community learning or collective learning. It was a big thing in the 90s, I don't know what they call it now. I don't know what they call it now. CL, collective learning or community learning. But when I have time, I don't lecture students. I might briefly summarize something but usually we start off with questions and I have questions for them and we work towards solving something and reflecting on something together and don't believe in it be hierarchical. And one thing I believe is that it should be a safe space. Words thoughts and questions should be respected and that we really need to listen. And that we shouldn't be afraid to talk and if you are, I will call on them. Because at UT you have, you have to call on them. And that it's always okay to start with questions. So we, it's a variation on what we learned in conference style. Its like, I don't have to be here and neither do you. How are we going to work this space. … Collective learning is better. And my thing is that you have to remind everyone that they are accountable too (LRosas interview, 3/2010).

LRosas explains here that *insurgent learning* builds on forms of teaching and learning practices that are collective and community-oriented. *Conviviality* is expressed as a non-hierachical and safe space where dialogue is promoted and practices are collectively formed. Her teaching was also informed by observing Raul's work in SOY workshops:

> In terms of pedagogy. SOY was the place that completely got me to think about what it means to teach holistically. Not only in the ways we need in classroom but holistically in your life. And your whole life experience. It's a trajectory to heal yourself, to empower yourself. So that through the medicine stories. You are not

> just trying to gain knowledge but hopefully transform yourself and your community. That I saw in SOY (LRosas interview, 3/2010).

For other ASCR participants, the *encuentros* they organized in their east Austin work provided the space for the kind of medicine stories that was practiced at Resistencia. Their version of critical and place based learning described as a form of insurgent pedagogy sought to link their teaching and study with their community work. As activist spaces of learning, these east Austin *encuentros* were also created to fight gentrification policies in east Austin and to form alliances with other activist scholars and community folk. Another set of practices of insurgent pedagogy were the academic *talleres* to support ASCR's collective mentoring projects that countered the traditional graduate apprenticeship model. ASCR educators also employed these practices in their undergraduate classes. An example of insurgent learning used in MCallahan's undergraduate research class had students "map" East Austin using *coyuntural* analysis. Student projects were conducted in East Austin communities that sought to analyze real community issues.

Partly based on Paulo Freire's limits and possibilities framework and on new Zapatista practice, MCallahan sought to build more deeply student critical reflection, engagement and praxis. Coyuntural analysis based on this Zapatista model provided his students with the tools for real engaged scholarship and enable new subjectivities and identities. Rather than consumers of knowledge, these educators repositioned students in their classroom as "history makers" in these spaces according to Escobar (2008): "humans live at their best when engaged in history making, meaning the ability to engage in the ontological act of disclosing new ways of being, of transforming the ways in which they understand and deal with themselves and the world (p. 235).

Through an "intense engagement with a place and collectivity," Escobar argues, "place-based activists, intellectuals and common people do not act as detached contributors to the public debate" enabling activist identities that arise out of "involved experimentation" or local contentious practice (p. 235). Escobar describes how new critical pedagogies and practices that transgress boundaries of schools and community can enact forms of insurgent agency that transforms participant ways of knowing and being. Consultants in these spaces utilized a number of critical transnational discourses in their pedagogy and identity work. A major influence were the indigenizing discourses and material practices that enabled new emergent forms of Chicanisma/o pedagogy and politic.

Another element of insurgent learning constituted a more democratic research approach that challenged disciplinary boundaries in terms of the constitution of groups as well as their research practices. AGomez explains how the ASCR for example was made up of "multiple layers there given that there were historians, anthropologists and people of different disciplines" (AGomez interview, 7/2010). Consultants' methodological perspectives underscore heteroglossic research that is inter-, multi-, and cross-disciplinary. Although AGomez refers to ASCR practice in this passage, this approach to research methodology was universally shared by participants in all three sites. Multiple disciplinary approaches also call for reframing objects of study through multiple lenses that disrupt traditional epistemological grounding as a basis for research. It provides, as Lipsitz argues, for methodologies organized around an object of study to help explain how connections and commitments to aggrieved communities struggling for power can enhance rather than inhibit scholarly research (Lipsitz 2007, p. 53). This inter- and multi-

disciplinary approach also resonates with LGC research practices that use story and storytelling as approaches to research and pedagogy that draws on varied "linguistic formation and historical traditions" but are always grounded in local community issues and driven by a distinctly social justice ethic for change rather than based on new empiricist tendencies that value more scientific and quantitative approaches (Lather, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Insurgent learning also meant rearticulating institutional spaces that challenged the form and nature of space and place where real learning could occur. The history of ASCR is laid out in a Bahl and Callahan (1996) essay where they trace its origins to the Advanced Postcolonial Borderlands Studies (APBS) group in the Fall of 1996, although members had already been engaged in collective action around campus and East Austin neighborhood issues for many years prior. Prior to its institutionalization, participants had formed *virtual centers* that were dynamic and transient, "mobile community spaces where politicized students, faculty, and community activists could gather to share information and resources; provide mutual support; forge links between university and the larger Austin political community" (Callahan 2008, email correspondence). These dynamic formations of collectives enabled active participation in community and campus struggles. They transformed "public houses" and "happy hours" into these virtual centers to create collective spaces to respond to local issues on campus, in east Austin communities and organizing local actions in support of the EZLN and other transnational movements in the early 1990s. These fluid, dynamic spaces of organizing would later develop into the APBS as a space with specific goals and objectives in an effort to cement their solidarity work with EZLN and other local community struggles. AGomez

describes their efforts to convene *encuentros* that help facilitate this local and transnational network development between university and community activists:

> Yeah, we had an *encuentro* there. It was the *encuentro* for social movement and it was with Marienne and Jamie, Manolo. We had just come back from something. There was an international *encuentro* of students, that's what it was. So, AZ was around, there was that influence of the Zapatistas, saying, come down and check out what we're doing but go back to your communities and do work there. Ask these questions, about how does neo-liberalism affect you, what are the low-intensity warfares, what are the violences that are happening. There was that political formation that was different folks but it was grassroots, undergrads, community folks. I always call them political formations and I get that from the writings about black fighting formations, that these are different political formations, and they had their own genealogies, gestation, dynamics, contradictions, challenges, and they were related. The advanced seminar was related to AZ, not just by the people that were involved or the ideas or the politics, the questions that we were asking, but by the fact that they were unique political formations that we felt were necessary given the political terrain they were engaging in. So, Resistencia's already having an existence, there was a different process there (AGomez interview, 6/2010).

As AGomez alludes to in this passage and Bahl and Callahan (1998) explain more fully in their essay, *insurgent learning* and *conviviality* signified a reclamation of situated knowledges and educational praxis linked to transnational social movements and local struggles. As radical scholars of color, they acknowledged the limits of traditional scholarship and saw themselves as accountable not only to the academy but to social action locally and globally. The EZLN and their praxis of *Zapatismo* was an especially formative influence as well as other critical discourses like Chicana and non western feminisms, post colonialism, subaltern studies, which influenced their pedagogy and politics. In 1996, they institutionalized their work under the title "Postcolonial Borderlands," which named a new emergent paradigm that would guide subsequent work (Bahl and Callahan, 1998, p. 12). The overarching goals of the organization included

both the "writing of 'cultural histories'" by participants in their particular fields and disciplines and in Chicana/o Studies, and political engagement in social justice struggles.

Part of this emergent paradigm considered the physical makeup of this new institutional space and whether this space was situated within or outside the academy. This conversation took on particular salience given their ongoing critique of established Ethnic studies programs that had been co-opted and institutionalized within the existing framework of the corporatist academy and had lost its ties to local Chicano and Mexicano communities. The ASCR articulated the creation of a "hybrid" or "third space" between these two spaces as a means of considering new modes of organizing that were more fluid and situational. Callahan suggests this more dynamic and provisional space in the following passage where participants would

> (i)nvestigate a critical dynamic that the ASCR made apparent, namely **temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production**. The ASCR revealed that there are always multiple networked spaces that facilitate the claiming of a knowledge commons. *Temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production* are critical spaces that reinvest in the transformative possibilities of learning communities. Within these dynamic spaces students, faculty, staff and community members can claim and create a variety of tools for rigorous, situated inquiry and informed intellectual work that serve specific constituencies while at the same moment assist in critically negotiating successful completion of an academic career. *Temporary autonomous zones of knowledge of production* elaborate both a critical space of rebellion and a strategy to establish conversations with emerging struggles (MCallahan email correspondence, 5/2009).

MCallahan suggests a more open and creative space that sought to continually reinvent itself through open-ended praxis as local conditions demanded. Part of that action and reflection would include engagement with other emergent struggles to seek out new orientations and perspectives. ASCR participants used an array of pedagogical and

political activities including *coyunturas* and *encuentros* that used convivial practices of collective leadership building and coyuntural analysis to examine and address local issues and concerns. I examine these practices in the following section on indigeneity and discourses that these practices were partially were based on. I also address *talleres*, a pedagogical practice borrowed from the FOCYP *cibercultura* laboratory led by Dr. Jorge A. Gonzalez. *FOCYP or* Formación de Ofertas Culturales y sus Públicos provides a model by which to examine historical, structural and cultural forces that impact our daily lived experiences (Gonzalez, 1997). Dr. Gonzalez was also an influential international scholar who had served as visiting professor at UT Austin in 2002 and at Texas State University where he collaborated with Miguel Guajardo. He was recognized as a leading scholar in activist scholarship in Mexico where he had developed community grounded approaches to graduate training that sought to create more activist scholars. *Talleres* were developed as part of their collective radical mentoring project to build an array of pedagogical and research skills generally lacking in graduate school preparation (Bahl and Callahan, 1998).

For example, ASCR participants organized *talleres* around "objects of study" that prepared graduate students for dissertation research projects, *talleres* on graduate qualifying exams and *talleres* for preparing dissertation chapters, course and syllabi prep, critical pedagogies, literature review, bibliographies, job talks and reverse engineering processes to analyze texts that made up seminar reading lists. The group spent considerable time on the "objects of study" *taller* to develop research and writing skills. The premise that guided this task was to make the research process more transparent since most minority graduate students had been ill prepared by faculty mentors who were themselves overwhelmed by demands of the university. The exercise had members

translate his or her research project into eight areas that were then shared with the group in order to help gain clarity and communicability. Reverse engineering referred to a more rigorous and critical reading process that drew out the relationships, processes or logic of given categories. These *talleres* were organized to ensure collaborative and horizontal interaction based on collective mentoring and advising processes (THerrera email correspondence, 8/2002).

As a form of autonomous political organizing, this practice also resonates with Linda Tuhiwai Smith's idea of "strategic positioning" that signifies a deliberate strategy of emancipatory struggles, "of being able to plan, predict and contain, across a number of sites, the engagement in struggle" (1999, p. 186). Smith is important here for also clarifying another aspect of TAZKP (temporary zones of autonomous knowledge production) that is part of the ASCR's decolonizing research project-- that is the idea of networking as a form of resistance particularly when organized by marginalized communities. We have seen recent successful expressions of networking that utilize new internet technologies to disseminate knowledge and information, to effectively build relationships and to mobilize movements (Castells, 2006).

The third role of university practice, apprenticeship service, that Simon and Masschelein described above was criticized by ASCR participants for its adherence to a entrepreneurial university model of graduate student apprenticeship. CSalinas describes how ASCR participants challenged this process by which the university produces traditional intellectuals. They worked to disrupt traditional professor/student relationship by engaging in collective mentorship as CSalinas describes here:

> We were trying to think through how to redefine how education is being done at the graduate level because normally it was defined by the student's relationship with the professor, their so-called mentor. It was a very unequal relationship, very

> one-dimensional relationship, then you're taught to compete with your colleagues, with other graduate students, to have this relationship with your mentor to produce your work. It seemed to me very ridiculous because if the mentor isn't good, if they don't teach you what you need to know, then you can't possibly learn anything. So that was one thing, on one level, the idea of *collective mentorship,* rather than relying on this professor to pass along their information to you. This was a way that we're trying to look at how to help each other find a new way to relate to each other that is not just an unequal, one-dimensional relationship. It's more true to the way we normally operate, like in communities, like back home. You're part of these multi-dimensional relationships and so the way I recognized it was that we were trying to recreate that sort of inter-relational connection amongst each other. It just makes more sense, there is a refusal to compete against your colegas. When we walked back into that *Borderlands* class that I talked about, I think David gave us all the stats about grad school, like 75% of you aren't going to make it out, and he was making it feel absolutely impossible to complete this (CSalinas interview, 1/2010).

CSalinas focuses on the inherently unequal relationship that defines traditional professor-student relationships and how ASCR practiced more intersubjective and horizontal modes of interaction. As a form of convivial practice, this approach to collective mentorship between ASCR participants also extended to their teaching practices where they focused on student-centered approaches that empowered undergraduate students. Their university work was always mediated with their work in local and transnational movement struggles whether through the work of organizing and leading east Austin *coyunturas* to build activist networks or through their support of indigenous struggles in Mexico.

AGomez articulates the challenge of scholar activists who are working in institutions that are disconnected from their community work. The challenge consists of negotiating these two sometimes disparate figured worlds, one's pedagogical work within the institution and one's political work outside in one's community. *Insurgent learning* and *convivial practice* as a form of educational praxis resonate with LGC and RSA pedagogical theories and practices. Like the praxis that grounds the LGC's pedagogy of

place and the RSA's poetry workshops, they are grounded in local community work, always informed by local histories and articulated through ongoing political and cultural struggle. Where youth voices and knowledge were the principle forms that were included in this pedagogical practice, the ASCR sought to include community activist and indigenous voices and knowledge. Conviviality names the dialogic character of social relations in this space and is embodied in their pedagogy. Insurgent learning names the implicit ideology that this practice embodies, based in part in Zapatismo indigenous practice. This latter ideological discourse I consider more fully in the concluding section of this chapter.

The ASCR, LGC and RSA are hybrid sites in which place-based and transnational practices are expressions of new pedagogical spaces that subvert the received and dominant representation of histories and provide for reframed resistance and new political subjectivities less dependent and informed by nationalist discourses. They critique the logic of neoliberalism in contemporary education that represents a reframed form of "banking education" (Freire, 1977) where teaching and learning are stripped of "historical processes and political horizons from the content of curriculum" and marginal histories and stories are unacknowledged (De Lissovoy, 2008, p. 135). Velez-Ibanez and Sampaio (2002) refer to these new emergent Latina/o formations as "transnational localities" to underscore the merging of micro and macro socio economic and political processes (p. 26) in the manner that De Lissovoy articulates that considers "the classroom space as an ecology" which creates "heteroglossic and hybrid spaces of learning": "This new notion of hybridity is" … "an oppositional one that moves beyond the practice of border crossing and combining difference and creates a new and collective identity and solidarity. This is founded on a transnational perspective that is experienced as a kind of

locality and that strives for to produce a new and shared collective identity" (De Lissovoy 2008, pp. 122-23 and 124-26).

These new spaces are reframing educational praxis as place-based, pinto pedagogies and insurgent forms of learning that speak to the truth of historical and geographic power. I contend that the practices I have just described provide concrete lessons for educators as they go about their work of teaching and organizing in the following terms: 1) Reframing critical and culturally relevant practices 2) New cultural and collective identity practices; 3) Storytelling as pedagogical, cultural and political practice. In my closing section of Chapter 5 where I describe these and other implications for activist and researchers, I expand on these three implications.

In the following and last section of chapter 4, I discuss my third emergent theme: how indigenous and transnationalist discourses influenced participant identity practices, individually and collectively in these educational sites. Indigenizing discourses and practices play a significant role in the political and pedagogical work of these consultants partly though their transnational work with other organizations and decolonial movements. This work has resulted in a reframing of indigenous features of early Chicanismo/a from simply a recovery of precolumbian Indian heritage to a more concrete expression of indigeneity rooted in political and intellectual praxis.

3) REFRAMED INDIGENITY: RECONSIDERING AND RECONSTITUTING INDIGENOUS PRACTICE

> The implications for indigenous research which have been derived from the imperatives inside the struggles of the 1970's seem to be clear and straightforward: the survival if peoples, cultures and languages; the struggle to become self determining, the need to take back control of our destinies. These

> imperatives have demanded more than rhetoric and acts of defiance. The acts of reclaiming, reformulating and reconstituting indigenous cultures and languages have required the mounting of an ambitious research programme, one that is very strategic in its purpose and activities and relentless in its pursuit of social justice (Smith 1999, p. 142).

In the two previous sections, I have argued that the emancipatory pedagogy and identity practices of the Llano Grande Center (LGC), Advanced Seminar for Chicana/o Research (ASCR) and Red Salmon Arts/Resistencia's (RSA) are specifically tied to certain epistemological and ontological influences. I suggested earlier that this new sense of Chicana/o thought and practice by these participants is informed by new social movement theory and praxis as well as their ongoing contemporary struggles for educational and social change. In this section, I wish to delve further into the nuances of this new reframed sense of Chicanisma/o that articulates new explicitly transnational forms of solidarity impacted by decolonial and indigenous influences in their theorizing and practice. The first section/subtheme considers how participants imagine and theorize transnational Chicana/o activism as indigenizing praxis not in some romanticized way as simply shared ethnicity but that also acknowledging the privileged status of Chicanaos *vis a vis* indigenous Mexicanos. I then extend this discussion by considering specifically the impact of indigenous social movements on their epistemological and political praxis. I end my discussion by focusing on how these discourses are materially expressed and performed in their political and educational work.

These three subthemes underscore how indigenous discourses emerged and cut across all three sites in similar yet unique ways but particularly in their work as educators and researchers to reclaim and recover the critical intellectual heritage that Smith articulates above. In this section, I demonstrate how their work draws from multiple

critical and interdisciplinary traditions, including those that center "a politics of indigenous identity and indigenous cultural action" (Smith, 1999, p. 146). Indigenity not only informed their pedagogical and political work but also helped to shape participant individual and collective *habitus* that challenged the discourses of "a unified national imaginary," instead celebrating identities and cultural representations beyond the nation state (Concannon et al., 2008). This new imagined transnationalism that focuses on transnational linkages rather than solely nationalist discourses celebrates more hybrid and borderlands subjectivities and identities. As such, these sites function as "transnational spaces" that "foster the emergence of pluri-local identities that are no longer subject to a unified, national imaginary" (Concannon et al., 2008, p. 4). This borderlands subjectivity marked by indigenous and decolonizing processes produces a more critical perspective and consciousness and is expressed in their pedagogical and political practice.

Indigenity as theorized and practiced in these spaces functioned as a critical, decolonial and emancipatory discourse and praxis tied to contemporary indigenous struggles in the US and internationally. ASCR educators point to the influence of the EZLN movement in Chiapas whose indigenous discourse shaped their academic and political work. LGC educators have always acknowledged indigenous identification in their work but which now has taken on new meaning as part of their extended LGC network with indigenous communities. Indigenity has always figured prominently in the work of Raul Salinas beginning with his work with AIM activists in federal prisons then later at *El Centro de La Raza* in Seattle. It continued to impact his writing, educational and political work at RSA/Resistencia Bookstore, and stills undergirds the current work of educators there who strive to bridge critical and indigenous practice in their daily work.

Imagining Transnationalist Chicana/o Activism

> Subaltern studies foregrounds "the inadequacy of the models of intellectual and political protagonist that correspond to the period of liberation struggle in the sixties in which many of us were formed" (Beverley qtd. in Rabasa, 1997).

In this section, I argue that participants enact, in their indigenous and transnational narrative and aesthetic strategies and institutional formations, a critical form of political and cultural transnational activism building on the lessons of the 1960s and 1970s liberation struggles. My observations suggest how they function as spaces for the production of "transnational connectivities and flows" through their political and educational work. For example, via their work with Accion Zapatista network, ASCR participants build on transnational solidarity work. LGC participants have developed a transnational network through the work of the CLE that extends their work internationally. RSA continues to build on the work of Raul Salinas who established a web of relationships through his affiliation with the International Treaty Council and Leonard Peltier Support Committee.

Transnational movements represent new modes of solidarity work that have also relied on emergent internet and social networking technologies according to a number of scholars (Castells, 1997, 2006; Gonzalez, 1997; Ronfeldt and Arquilla, 2001). Castells describes these transnational political formations based on a "networking, decentered form of organization and intervention" as more dynamic and fluid than traditional political formations of the past (1997, p. 362). I turn first to the work of the ASCR whose formation I have described earlier as constituted in response to the failure of the academy

to address many of the concerns of Chicana/o activist graduate students at the University of Texas at Austin.

In an unpublished essay, MCallahan describes how participants in the ASCR utilized "emergent, diverse, collective and autonomous strategies of subaltern knowledge production within the neoliberal university" as the basis by which to build local communities of practices. The ASCR and its precursor, the APSB relied on loosely formed networks supported by multiple web technologies (MCallahan, 2009, pp. 9-10). Many of the ASCR members were also involved with Accion Zapatista as well, a network of activist grassroots organizations who supported the work of the indigenous movement in Chiapas led by the EZLN and whose institutional political and cultural practices differed along new notions of solidarity.

While mainly based on Zapatismo indigenous practice, these organizational practices also borrowed from Jorge Gonzalez' work on *cultural fronts*. Cultural Fronts are also founded on new forms of solidarity that connect "'small and isolated worlds' on an international scale by strong and meaningful symbolic, political and economic bonds" (González, 2003; p. 121 qtd. in Maass and Gonzalez, 2005). The influence of indigenous and decolonial discourses has also directly influenced many of their academic projects and was the basis for their "postcolonial borderlands" theoretical framework. This theoretical paradigm adopted both Chicana/o and postcolonial and subaltern discourses including elements of Zapatismo in order to investigate "issues of identity formation, cultural production, domination, resistance, nationalism and state power" (Flores, 2000: p. 4).

This critical perspective regards the academy as a site of maneuver that requires activist work to make the academy accountable to social movements and to reframe its

practice of analysis in the context of local contentious struggle. At UT Austin, this work included struggles around the constitution and direction of the Center for Mexican American Studies. Graduate students sought to make it more accountable to local Chicano and Mexicano communities by producing "white papers" based on local community issues and designing curricular and pedagogical practices for the classes offered by the center.

To this end, and as part of the Rockefeller proposal, ASCR participants initiated a collective project that proposed an epistemological reading of Chicana/o Studies. This included a genealogical examination of how the university became the primary site of struggle for the Chicano/a community and what that meant for our Chicana/o and Mexicana/o communities today:

> We began by examining key texts in the field in order to uncover theoretical framework(s) and methodolog(ies) developed and claimed by Chicana/o scholars. This in turn helped us to articulate some of the debates, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks generated from Chicana/o Studies. Most significantly, this project included a reading of Chicana/o studies contextually by placing it in conversation with other ethnic studies projects and in conversation with indigenous, subaltern and postcolonial studies" (MCallahan email correspondence, 2008).

ASCR participants recognized the limits of radical scholarship in the academy unless integrally tied to local community struggles. They negotiated this contradiction somewhat perilously at times facilitated by their collective work in local and transnational social movements and by linking their teaching to local community work. For example, their Chicana/o studies ASCR graduate students designed a community based researched course partly modeled on participatory action research methodology and methods. This course would introduce community research strategies and techniques

that emphasize locally grounded transdisciplinary approaches to comparative research and knowledge production including narrative inquiry, critical ethnographies and archival research. The goal of this course was to produce locally rooted information systems that serve constituencies in the UT Austin Chicana/o, Mexican/o and Latina/o communities.

For participants in the RSA/Resistencia who were already based in local communities and not bound by contradictions imposed by working in the academy, their transnational activist work can be traced to the founding and origin of Resistencia. RSalinas had already begin building transnational linkages in his prison work with AIM movement activists and in his work at *El Centro de La Raza* upon his immediate release from Marion in the early 1970's. This transnational work with Native activists around the world informs a major part of Resistencia and RSA's transnational resistance project today. This passage describes the origins of this transnational work traced to his affiliation with the Treaty council in the early 1980s after he arrived in Austin in 1981:

> We went to Nicaragua with the treaty council, that was just a quick visit that we did to the ministry of culture, while we were in Nicaragua. ….Well, the treaty council is an NGO, a non-governmental organization, has a seat at the UN, no voting power, but has a seat, and so, we were invited after Geneva to a seminar on racial discrimination throughout the world. It was an international conference so what constituted racism, defining those things within the parameters of what the treaty councils goals compared to it (RSalinas interview, 3/2006).

RSalinas' early transnational solidarity work with the Treaty council already underscores linkages between conditions and struggles for natives in the US and the world and the importance of these efforts to continually build macro/micro alliances as essential to Chicana/os solidarity work. Salinas and other RSA participants continued this solidarity work throughout the 1990s, frequently sponsoring meetings, activities and

events in support of the EZLN in Mexico. In fact, RSA and ASCR strengthened their local networking by working with Accion Zapatista members coordinating activities at the bookstore for EZLN solidarity events. The LGC has always articulated a transnational vision in their activist work. This linkage is historical and personal and guides their analysis of their academic and political work.

In the following passage, Miguel and Francisco Guajardo describe this incipient and emergent transnationalism that was hinted at in the young Guajardos crossing into the US from Mexico where they eventually settled in the Delta region of South Texas, as had millions before and after them.

> Fourteen years after *Brown v. Board of Education,* our father borrowed a 1962 Ford pickup truck and crossed the Rio Grande River with his wife and young children. Papi and Mami rode up front and the boys rode in the back of the half-ton truck, nestled amid the remainder of our worldly possessions.. On the last day of 1968, we immigrated into the United States. The two of us, our older brother, and another little one on the way, would soon enroll in the Edcouch-Elsa public schools, a school district enveloped in deep turmoil as a result of a contentious school walkout that had occurred just one month prior to our sojourn from Mexico (2004, p. 514).

This passage also alludes to the developing militancy of the local Chicano community in Edcouch Elsa that was feeling the impact of an emergent Chicano movement that was reverberating across the Southwest. Locally, this inspired local high school Chicana/o youth to protest the racist educational practices of the Edcouch-Elsa High school including exclusionary practices of a cheerleadering team that prevented Chicanas from participating. Like other Chicano/a students across the southwest, this protest manifested as walkouts, or blowouts as they were commonly referred to, by hundreds of Chicano/a students. This transnationalist community activism extended to their academic work and their work at the LGC. As this passage illustrates, LGC

participants deploy a transnationalist perspective here expressed in terms of a dialogical and dialectical local and global theoretical perspective.

> The theoretical framework for our analysis derives from micro-macro ntegrative theory (Ritzer, 1996). Ritzer asserts that various forms of this model exist, but he advocates a hybrid model that prevents extreme separations of the two; the dual construction restricts the analysis of data through a binary lens. Instead, we construct a constant communication between the micro and the macro. This connection formulates itself as a dialogical process that is reciprocal between the micro and the macro realities (p. 505).

This analysis was used in this essay to make sense of the 1968 walkout that they discuss in this essay. However, this macro and micro approach has continued to impact their analysis and work as they build transnational networks with both the LGC and CLE. Another element of this transnationalist activism is expressed in decolonizing methodological practices. PGuajardo explains how Smith's work is especially influential where "she talks about decolonizing our methodologies and she talks about storytelling is one of the decolonizing methodologies—we're smacking you know that tradition" (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010). More recently, the Guajardos have begun facilitating this transnational work by building on their growing CLE network.

This work has also provided opportunities to extend transnational work with native communities in the US including the Sadish Cudni in Montana, the Llami in Washington State, the Sandi Cud of New York and Laguna and Acamo Pueblo in New Mexico (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010) and with other indigenous communities throughout the world. Edyael Casaperalta, an LGC graduate and now Program Associate with the Center for Rural Strategies and Francisco Guajardo participated in the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) and have recently contributed work in an volume of essays titled *Indigenous Educational Models for Contemporary*

Practice edited by Dr. Nee-Benham. In one of these essays PGuajardo explains how reflecting on his upbringing in light of his indigenous work, he sees a certain affinity with indigenity:

> The Ojibwe elder may as well be my mother. I recall my mother's voice as the most formative in shaping my identity, my values the way I deal with my children and others beyond the nurturing influence she had on my siblings and me my mother also taught us how to build relationships, how to be well humored as we develop trust with others and how to do human networking (Guajardo, 2009).

PGuajardo describes his mother's child rearing practice as providing him some lessons about networking and relationship building, home based skills that have informed their current epistemological, research and political practice. This transnational work has provided a renewed perspective that has helped refine their local, place based vernacular work informed by larger macro and global practices. Smith (1999) also remind us of how networking with other indigenous, decolonial and postcolonial activists is another form of indigenizing work that nurtures powerful relationship building that scales up local oppositional work to effect even larger movements for decolonizing social change (pp. 156-57). More recently, the LGC has begun exploring transnational and indigenous models through their work with the CLE that directly influences their contemporary theorizing and practice, especially through the work of Dr. Nanette Nee-Benham:

> Nanette is one of the leading indigenous scholars in the world but she's also really taken to the work of the Llano Grande center and so she (Manette) has essentially indigenized Llano Grande. …This is in the last 5-6 years. We've always had a real indigenous quality to our work and we've never called it that. In fact, I write a piece here where I talk about how…the heart of this story is the piece that I write here and I narrate how the…okay my mother's voice…first of all I say: And so some of this stuff…and then my father and I talk about the indigenous quality of our parents and there are a couple other pieces here and I just wanted to point

> you in this direction. And then we've got some other stuff coming out, Miguel and I do, that are very like indigenous (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010).

While this indigenous quality is implicit and rendered in emotional terms, coupled with this renewed perspective from his transnational work with indigenous scholars and communities, it has, as he puts it, "indigenized" Llano Grande's work. In these next two sections I examine more fully the impact indigenous movements have on participants' educational and political work to understand how indigenous discourses have historically and in the present continue to inform their work.

Impact of Indigenous Movements

> SOY is a long sounding echo of the past (Raul Salinas).

In this quote, RSalinas evokes above multiple memories and histories that impact the work that he and other consultants still do at Resistencia/RSA but none more than his longstanding affiliation with indigenous movements that defined much of his historical and educational work. In the same way that Smith articulates this influence above, this section captures elements of how that discourse partially operates in these sites. Smith (1999) rightly situates indigenous research projects in the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s that challenged and transformed contemporary western hegemonic theories and practices to consider local and indigenous cultures and languages as legitimate and valid objects of study. LGC's understanding of the importance of alternative ontologies and epistemological production is partly based on indigenous perspectives that refuse to separate culture and nature, and subject and object. Questions of being and of community are at the basis of their epistemological critique of European-based traditional forms of

teaching and learning. Instead, constructivist epistemological positions like those that ASCR and RSA participants advocate indigenous ways of being and knowing. Their work critiques Manichean frames of reference and offers instead non-dualist and more complexly theorized approaches that underscore the inherent relationships between subjects and objective "reality". In this section, I argue that these indigenous perspectives draw from indigenous social movements and knowledge projects that directly inform their research, pedagogy and political practice. I provide a few examples of how they imagine this indigenous and transnational work as engaging in one form of critical methodology. I noted earlier that early Chicanisma/o strategically claimed this shared cultural indigenous heritage and invoked a discourse of *mestizaje* that more forcefully claimed this indigenous heritage. This recovery of an Indian past was an important political and cultural strategy to contest a representational machine that had portrayed Mexicana/o and Chicana/o communities in pejorative ways.

However, scholars have recently problematized this discourse as potentially damaging and even emblematic of continued indigenous colonization (Urrieta, 2003). Urrieta calls for a consideration of differences between our first world positionality vis a vis some Mexicano third world status. This more critical self-reflexivity considers how *mestizaje* has operated in Mexico as a dominating discourse by racializing indigenous communities. I suggest that extending new Chicana/o discourses by drawing from the lessons in these spaces (that draw from indigenous epistemologies and histories and politics forged in social cultural and political struggle) would advance a more critical traditional *indigenismo*. This new more complexly realized decolonial turn embraces indigenous roots, culture, historical heritage and struggle and has become the basis for political and educational work for many of the participants I interviewed. As an

epistemological project, these activists are revisioning indigeneity in new contemporary terms, linking it with other critical and liberatory projects.

As the RSalinas quote above captures, the inspiration and politics that guides the work of participants at RSA/Resistencia was birthed in the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, grounded particularly in the prison rebellion movement of those struggles. While in prison, Salinas' personal and political transformation was shaped by his political work with *Chicanos Organizados Rebeldes Aztlan* (CORA), an organization of ethnic and anti-colonial activists, many of whom had been imprisoned for their political work in those movements (Gomez, 2006, 2009; Mendoza, 2006). Salinas' political and educational work continued immediately after his release in 1972, when he became involved with *El Centro de la Raza* as a staff member and lead instructor of their Indio-Chicano Education Project.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Salinas worked on a variety of civil rights struggles with Native American and Chicano movement struggles in Seattle where *El Centro* was based (Mendoza, 2006). In 1976, he became coordinator of the *Trail of Self Determination* and in 1977 he co-founded the national *Leonard Peltier Defense Support Committee* (Mendoza, 2008; Ybarra-Frausto, 1999). In the 1980s he became a delegate to the International Indian Treaty Council that represented Leonard Peltier at a Human Rights Symposium in Geneva (Mendoza, 2006). In the following passage, RSalinas describes the origins of this discursive and ideological influence in his early work with Native Americans in prison and after his release to Seattle:

> Yeah, I started working mainly with Native American heritage, we had an Indio Chicano heritage program that Leonard Peltier, Steve Robideau, myself, some students from the University of Washington, would go into the high schools. But I did most of my early work through the Native American community so I was doing Native American heritage to youngsters who had some native descent but

> had no knowledge, but the main thing was organization, how to organize youth, we had youth-organized poetry in Seattle, they realized how valuable it was at first. The people there are very political, "what does poetry have to do with… (RSalinas interview, 10/2007).

RSalinas' educational work with youth has always incorporated indigenous elements as we see here beginning with his youth work at El Centro in Seattle. These projects also played a formative role in creating a self-identity and political and educational practice that blended Chicano and Indio traditions. Indigenous praxis was grounded in his day-to-day work with youth and local community struggles. The impact of these indigenous movements on Salinas' personal and political development is clear and has been amply documented by Chicana/o scholars (Mendoza, 2008; Gomez, 2006, 2009).

These experiences continued to influence his work at Resistencia Bookstore and Red Salmon Arts that he founded upon his return to his east Austin neighborhood in 1981. This indigenous influence in his solidarity work has carried over to his writings and poetry as well. In his collection of poetry, *Indio Trails*, indigenous cultural aesthetics and themes are prevalent throughout and underscore how indigenous poetics impact his creative and political work. EGonzalez, a young poeta and currently Youth Director with the organization, People Organized in Defense of the Earth (PODER), for example, describes here the impact Salinas had when she first met him:

> When I was St. Ed's I took a class and for extra credit they asked us to go hear a *chicanindio* and I came from Eagle Pass where everyone identified as Mexican, we didn't even identify as Mexican American, we were all just brown. Coming from Eagle Pass to Austin was a little different (laughs). I said to myself *Chicanindio*, an elder. When I first met him he was talking about Leonard Peltier and I said to myself who is this man? (EGonzalez interview, 9/2007).

This recollection of EGonzalez' first encounter with Salinas at a talk he was giving to build support for the *Leonard Peltier Support Committee* was inspirational and

life changing as she recalls. Gonzalez' reflection captures the impact he had on many of us graduate students, community activists, poets and youth that passed through the doors of the bookstore. Many of the participants in the ASCR also were influenced by Salinas' work and used his bookstore as a gathering space for their transnational work with the EZLN throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. I turn now to the influence of this indigenous movement on the politics and culture of this organization.

For many of the ASCR participants, the impact of indigenous movements was rooted in their profound linkages to the EZLN struggles in Chiapas in the mid 1990s to the early 2000s. MCallahan explains the importance of the Zapatista movement and Zapatismo as a philosophy of praxis that guided their work with local struggles in Austin's communities of color. Callahan (2010 interview) explains that an important lesson of Zapatismo political organizing was their notion *situated practice*, a more dynamic and fluid mode of political and pedagogical engagement. Situated practice called for a more autonomous mode of organizing and teaching and research praxis based on collaborative and convivial organizational relationships and interaction. As a localized and grassroots form of research, this indigenous and critical methodology sought a new way for scholars to understand, represent and engage in local struggles that was deployed in communities "as a form of participation in them, from a particular sector" (Bahl and Callahan, 1998, p. 27). This more critical positionality of scholar activism evokes Joao Vargas' model of *observant participant* (2006) that seeks a more "folkloric understanding of revolutionary agency" (Rabasa, 1997). In his study of the EZLN movement, Rabasa traces this new model of academic and political intellectual to *Zapatismo* indigenous practice.

While the ASCR and its predecessor, the ASPB, drew on multiple influences, from Jorge Gonzalez' *cultural fronts* and *emergent knowledge communities* to James Scott's idea of the advanced seminar in peasant and subaltern studies, indigenous discourses played a key role in their formation. These critical discourses shared a critique of capitalist postmodernity and its standardizing and quantifying discourses and knowledge production in favor of local epistemological practices. ASCR participants also articulated an indigenous vocabulary and discourse that borrowed especially from the EZLN movement and Zapatismo that merged with local, place-based work. Like my other two sites, ASCR similarly sought to examine the nexus between their academic work and community activism that examined alternative and autonomous spaces of research, learning and teaching and used elements of indigeneity to guide their work.

ASCR's project included the reclamation of situated and indigenous epistemologies and politics as key to their intellectual and political development, individually and as a collective. Key transnational, local and indigenous discourses included Chicana and non-western feminisms, postcolonialism, subaltern studies, Zapatismo and critical pedagogies among others that they brought under an emergent paradigm that they called "Postcolonial Borderlands" hence the name of its first iteration, Advanced Seminar in Postcolonial Borderlands (ASPB) (Bahl and Callahan 1998, p. 12). Via their collaboration with Accion Zapatista, ASCR's solidarity work was premised on the shared political and educational goals of Zapatismo that sought to advance indigenous cultural rights and autonomy as well as those of local communities in Austin.

Because of the success of this international network, ASCR modeled their organizational structures and political and educational praxis on more flexible and dynamic organizational structures. As such, ASCR became a key player in the

transnational movement to internationalize Zapatismo and part of a solidarity network that asserted "a communicable Indian discourse beyond its immediate, local situation" (Rabasa, 1997; pp. 400-401). These critical discourses were an especially formative influence on their teaching of these research methodologies in community research classes where undergraduate students were provided tools to engage in local community issues beyond traditional forms of community service work. Students were encouraged to engage in the "writing of 'cultural histories'" of local communities that could be shared with community members and in support of local initiatives. Students were encouraged to extend their participation beyond semester long commitments so that learning was sustained beyond the dictates of the academy and modeled on forms of indigenous cultural action as described by Smith (2006) that centered critical research projects on local indigenous voices and epistemological perspectives.

These indigenous elements of ASCR's work as I have described above involved continual practice alongside their theoretical engagement with Zapatismo. This work was facilitated as well within the transnational network of *Accion Zapatista* chapters. In fact, ASCR members were founders of the local AZ chapter and coordinated local work in Austin. Their transnational work with EZLN projects was closely integrated with local concerns and issues, whether on the UT campus where ASCR members work with custodial workers or in the planning of local *encuentros* and *coyunturas* to address local community concerns as I describe below in the section on indigenous praxis.

ASCR participants describe network organizational models that were influenced by Zapatismo and EZLN organizational practices: decentralized, loosely connected, temporary, situational and connected via ideological and epistemological practices and computer and internet technologies. For example, the Zapatismo movement represented

an example of this new form of organizing, and was described by some movement scholars as a transnational diasporic network organization. Zapatismo envisoned and practiced new formations that influenced the work of consultants and suggested how local work might be outside more traditional and perhaps reified narratives of organized resistance. Castells' (1996, 2006) studies of new social movements similarly contend that postmodern movements of today are characterized by nontraditional forms of political organization. In contrast to those that were centralized, hierarchical and long standing, these new movements instead take the form of loosely defined networks that are flexible and dynamic, and emergent formations that ebb and flow as local conditions and demands change. MCallahan, for example, describes how the EZLN movement inspired both the formation of the local Accion Zapatista chapter in support of Zapatismo and also structured the work of the APSB in the mid 1990s, then the ASCR later.

Rocco (2002) offers some insights on how we might conceptualize new forms of political organizing based on an expanded notion of the political beyond traditional views. This new perspective considers how the submerged networks of everyday life we encounter in schools, churches and other public spaces have the potential for political empowerment and collective action. These "sites of mediation" are where activities of everyday life are carried out and where "the effect of the practices of power are experienced" (p. 281). He argues that they also have the potential for supporting the "development of strong identities, enhanc(ing) trust and solidarity, and promot(ing) a sense of participatory rights and responsibilities" that provide the necessary conditions for rights claims to emerge (p. 280).

In this sense, these sites are transformed civic spaces where participants work to develop "practices and activities that are concerned with the direction of community and

collective life-- with the constitution of the public sphere" (p. 281) and to imagine new forms of solidarity, collective subjects and projects. Rocco uses Sassen's (1996a) notion of "situated spaces" to understand the dynamics of globalization and its impact on local communities. Situated space or place "allows us to recover the concrete localized processes through which globalization exists…" and also, Rocco adds, to understand how "practices and activities have also been fundamentally altered by changes which binds people and places together in these spaces and in the claims made on their economic, social, political and cultural dimensions" (p. 277). These Chicana/o educators have responded to the impact of capitalist globalization and restructuring of power relations in the everyday lives of Chicana/o communities where they worked by adopting these critical and emergent traditions of political organizing

To respond to the *diaspora* of many of the members who have moved on to other universities and sites of struggle, ASCR participants have utilized internet technologies to stay connected. One of the principal challenges has been to link the demand of their local work with the ASCR collective. AGomez describes a new vision of a collective subject/project connected via technology that facilitates collaboration despite geographic distances but still faces some challenges. While Gomez articulates some of the challenges for the ASCR, members in the LGC and RSA have responded more successfully.

The LGC has also been impacted by indigenous movements, though more so in terms of their epistemological projects rather than as part of a network of organizational practice as was the case with ASCR participants. While I read ASCR's nexus with indigenous movements as an indigenous knowledge project tied to Zapatismo, the work of the LGC is based on their work with indigenous scholars like Dr. Manette Nee-Benham and the CLE that are part of an movement of discursive practice that critiques

traditional teaching, learning and research theory and practice based on neoliberal modernity and capitalist globalization.

More recently, the LGC has begun engaging more concretely in indigenous educational models that influence their educational and political work at the LGC and the CLE. PGuajardo discusses how indigenous pedagogy has begun to impact their place-based practices in new ways:

> I wanted to sort of point another body of literature that has actually been very important to us and that is Indigenous pedagogy. …Yeah and in fact we worked with Linda Smith in New Zealand a few years ago and I've got some stuff here and in fact Edyael and I went to New Zealand to document the WIPCE, *The Royal Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education* (organized by) Manette Nee-Benham who is Dean of the School of Hawaiian knowledge at the University of Hawaii in Minoa is a good friend of ours … . Nanette is one of the leading indigenous scholars in the world but she's also really taken to the work of the Llano Grande center and so she (Manette) has essentially indigenized Llano Grande. …This is in the last 5-6 years. We've always had a real indigenous quality to our work and we've never called it that. In fact, I write a piece here where I talk about how…the heart of this story is the piece that I write here and I narrate how the…okay my mother's voice…first of all I say: And so some of this stuff…and then my father and I talk about the indigenous quality of our parents and there are a couple other pieces here and I just wanted to point you in this direction (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010).

This passage illustrates the influence of indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies on LGC work although as Guajardo suggests here indigeneity has always impacted their work if only implicitly. This transitional work with native Hawaiian communities and other indigenous groups around the world through their work with the WIPCE has continued to impact both the LGC work as well as their work with CLE participants that has expanded LGC influence beyond South Texas. In the following section, I consider how participants not only imagine indigeneity in their theorizing but

also how they have worked to implement transnational and indigenous epistemological projects in their daily educational and political practice.

Constructing Indigenous Educational Research and Political Praxis

> We seek spaces that constitute their own sites of struggle. So we leave academia to make connections with collectivities within which our very elitism is challenged and devalued. … Seeking the exit door, we search for meaning, value, and political relevance given that our institutions are incapable of providing the conditions for radicalism as anything other than performance. Resistance to violent and premature social and biological death requires that we as activist researchers change into radical subjects (Joy James and Ted Gordon, 2008).

In her groundbreaking work *Decolonizing Methododologies* (1999), Linda Tuhiwai Smith identifies twenty-five projects that make up her indigenous research program that demonstrate in concrete terms her decolonizing research project that she lays out in her previous six chapters. Many of the indigenizing projects that she describes share an affinity with the work of participants in my study, including for example, *testimonios*, storytelling, remembering, cultural survival, networking and indigenizing among others. Drawing from Ward Churchill's work, she posits that indigenizing projects are constituted by practices that center "landscapes, images, languages, themes, metaphors, and stories in the indigenous world" on the one hand and draw "upon the traditions—the bodies of knowledge and corresponding code of values—evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over" on the other (pp. 142-162). According to Smith and Churchill, indigenizing projects represent and are founded then on an epistemic break with traditional conceptions of teaching and learning. They also represent, as some scholars have argued about these critical projects, a more fundamental

break with European ontologies upon which most traditional knowledge projects are founded (Maldonado-Torres, 2008; Mignolo, 2005; De Lissovoy, 2011).

For Chicana/o activist scholars in these sites, these projects included focusing on ways to decolonize the academy and schools by identifying institutional forms of coloniality in education and offering alternative institutional spaces that enable their anticolonialist and indigenous-based educational and political work. By positioning themselves as indigenous researchers, these Chicana/o activists claim "a genealogical, cultural, and political set of experiences" (Smith, 1999) that they draw from to conduct their educational and organizational work. These local, place-based and transnational practices that I described above in the previous two sections are commensurate with indigenous theory and practice that "centres a politics of indigenous identity and indigenous cultural action grounded in alternative conceptions of perspectives and values that openly borrows from feminist and critical research approaches" (pp. 146-147).

Moreover, these academic and community works are based on traditions of descent (local cultural traditions) and dissent (legacies of struggle and social movements), and form the basis for their resistance to traditional institutional practices to create alternative and resistive spaces (Smith, 2006, pp. 12-13). This resistive practice is based on a critique of coloniality that Maldonado-Torres (2007) describes as a set of colonial processes based on longstanding patterns of colonial power. These are practices of coloniality according to Maldonado-Torres because they "define culture, labor, intersubjective relations and knowledge production" and take on a myriad of forms in contemporary institutional practice. In educational institutions, for example, where many of these projects are based, coloniality is performed daily "in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self image of people,

in aspirations of self, and in so many other aspects of our modern experience" that work in tandem to produce the modern subject (p. 243). I begin my discussion of these institutional projects based on indigenous and critical discourses that I outlined above with the work of the ASCR where they deployed institutional forms developed by the EZLN movement.

ASCR participants borrowed the e*ncuentros* and *coyunturas* model of organizing and education as well as *cultural fronts* developed by Jorge Gonzalez that were local, indigenous organizational formations that linked community based research and action (ASCR prospectus, 2002). These projects were also the basis for collective practice and individual and collective identity formation that resulted in the creation of emergent knowledge communities (ekc's) that were mobilized to engage in *situated praxis* as I described above. *Encuentros* had been mobilized by the EZLN in 1996 and 1999 to mobilize thousands of supporters in Chiapas from all over the world convened to collectively discuss new solidarity strategies and tactics based on indigenous models. Similarly, *coyunturas* were spaces where coyuntural praxis occurred, based on collective, non-hierarchical and convivial political and educational work for social change. ASCR participants similarly deployed local *encuentros* and coyuntural practice at UT Austin to examine collectively "the critical process of graduate training" and the "production of knowledge and intellectuals in the context of Chicano studies" (MCallahan email correspondence, 2009) as the following passage describes:

> Members of the Advanced Seminar took control of their professional futures by investing in a space that made the training of academics of color as transparent and distributed as possible. The institutionalization of the Advanced Seminar as a space for collectively determined knowledge production meant that the Advanced Seminar transcended more traditional models of graduate student organizing, such as reading, support, and dissertation writing groups. The Advanced Seminar

> successfully provided an alternative institutional space that nurtured emergent, diverse, collective and autonomous strategies of subaltern knowledge production within the neoliberal university (Callahan email correspondence, 2009).

These political and pedagogical tools based on Zapatista models were adopted by ASCR participants to respond to local issues and concerns like those faced by graduate students at UT Austin. The purpose of this particular *encuentro* and *coyuntura* was to address the nature of the apprenticeship process in academia that trained graduate students for professionalization in the field (ASCR Synopsis, 2003). ASCR participants addressed questions of mentorship, training, methodology, pedagogy and collectivity in the academy generally but focused especially on the Chicano studies departments and programs since many of the graduate students were borderlands, third world and Chicano studies scholars. In fact, from its earliest formation as the ASPB, the ASCR had always provided a space where these questions could be collectively articulated theoretically and in material struggle in various university and local and transnational struggles:

> Yeah, we had an *encuentro* there. It was the *encuentro* for social movement and it was with Marienne and Jamie, Manolo. We had just come back from something. There was an international *encuentro* of students, that's what it was. So, AZ was around, there was that influence of the Zapatistas, saying, come down and check out what we're doing but go back to your communities and do work there. Ask these questions, about how does neo-liberalism affect you, what are the low-intensity warfares, what are the violences that are happening. There was that political formation that was different folks but it was grassroots, undergrads, community folks. I always call them political formations and I get that from the writings about black fighting formations, that these are different political formations, and they had their own genealogies, gestation, dynamics, contradictions, challenges, and they were related. The advanced seminar was related to AZ, not just by the people that were involved or the ideas or the politics, the questions that we were asking, but by the fact that they were unique political formations that we felt were necessary given the political terrain they were engaging in. So, Resistencia's already having an existence, there was a different process there (AGomez interview, 7/2010).

ASCR participants organized local *encuentros* in East Austin in which activists convened for one or two days. They employed *coyuntural* analysis that helped to facilitate their training as educators and redefine traditional university courses in their departments and disciplines to emphasize research and activism. While these political and pedagogical tools were influenced by Zapatismo they were employed as a local and situated praxis that engaged communities in self-reflection and activities reminiscent of Freirian cultural circles, employing Freirian analysis to critically examine local issues in the context of structural problems and limit situations.

Herrera described another *encuentro/coyuntura* held in 2002 in South Texas with LGC participants to extend networking opportunities and develop future alliances and projects (THerrera email correspondence, 2002). CSalinas and RGamez, another ASCR member facilitated this three-day encounter in which resources were shared, and information and networking opportunities were created for both ASCR and LGC participants. These indigenous tools used by ASCR became an integral part of their radical collective mentoring project in an effort to enhance student power, authority and autonomy (Bahl and Callahan, 1998).

Even prior to their formation, Chicana/o and other progressive graduate students were experimenting with this unique model of organizing that would later become more refined after Zapatistas had introduced it in the 1990's. Beginning with the founding of the Barrio Student Resource Center with other Chicana/o groups in the early 1990's in east Austin, Chicana/o graduate and undergraduate students create what they described as *virtual centers of situated practice* around university and community issues. These alternative and autonomous formations transformed "public houses" and "happy hours" into "virtual centers" of political action where dozens of graduate, undergraduate and

community activist gathered to strategize. These virtual centers were described by Callahan as "mobile community spaces where politicized students, faculty, and community activist could gather to share information and resources; provide mutual support; forge links between university and the larger Austin political community" (MCallahan email correspondence, 2008). These formations of temporary zones of knowledge production (TAKZP) reflected this new indigenous organizational models as he describes below anticipating Zapatista encuentros and coyuntural practice:

> I think it's important to note that what I just explained, in terms of the virtual center and in and beyond the academy and a *temporary autonomous zones of knowledge production* as an autonomous site of learning and insurgency, all that preceded '94 and the Zapatistas. Before the Zapatistas, we put our energy into, and it took us a long time to invite the Austin Chicano community to take up the Barrio Student Resource Center, there was a lot of resistance to it at first. Once we get the Barrio Student Resource Center, we made a number of tactical capitulations, knowing that they would be the demise of the center, including the space (MCallahan interview, 3/2010).

Resistencia Bookstore has a long history of institutional work based on indigenous and decolonial theory and practice. EGonzalez noted how Resistencia functioned as a safe and sacred space based on RSalinas' indigenous worldview. In the following passage, LMendoza refers to Resistencia Bookstore as a healing space, as well as a political space where individuals are provided a venue to escape the sometimes dehumanizing and alienating work and school environments:

> I think it's important to say that it's not only the critical literacy about society, but beyond that, it's also important to realize it's a place where one can develop an alternative spirituality. How they see themselves in relation to the universe, to the world around them, to all these various disempowering social institutions. I think it's important to not lose sight of that, it's not just all political work, it's certainly not all just play, but it's also something else that's deeper, almost like a spiritual outlet (Mendoza interview, 2/2010).

For LMendoza, this space nurtures the possibility of a retreat from daily struggles where spiritual healing can occur based in an alternative or indigenous spirituality. Salinas' deep connections to indigeneity would suggest spirituality embedded in indigenous discourses and practices as a source for psychic healing to occur. In fact, attending the monthly poetry readings and SOY workshops at Resistencia, one cannot escape indigenous influences that pervade this physical space. Symbolically, the iconography that pervades this space articulates evocatively an indigenous vocabulary and history of Salinas' involvement in political struggles. Represented on the walls of the bookstore are photos and prints by local artists that highlight his work with Native American Chicana/o and international issues. As one scans the walls, you see dozens of photos and artwork that evoke this indigenous influence. The poetry readings, workshops and other organizational meetings at Resistencia generally begin with the burning of sage that gives off a distinctive odor that fills the bookstore and sets the mood for the work that follows. In order to create a more interactive and collaborative environment, participants generally sit in a circle to promote conviviality and interaction.

RSalinas describes the origins of his educational and political work at Resistencia to his solidarity work with Native Americans in prison and after his release in Seattle with *El Centro*:

> Yeah, I started working mainly with Native American heritage, we had an Indio Chicano heritage program that Leonard Peltier, Steve Robideau, myself, some students from the University of Washington, would go into the high schools. But I did most of my early work through the Native American community so I was doing Native American heritage to youngsters who had some native descent but had no knowledge, but the main thing was organization, how to organize youth, we had youth-organized poetry in Seattle, they realized how valuable it was at first. The people there are very political, "what does poetry have to do with… (RSalinas interview, 2/2006).

RSalinas' educational work with youth has always incorporated indigenous elements as we see here beginning with his youth work at El Centro. These merging of Chicano and Indio traditions also played a formative role in self and collective identity practices and how he envisioned this work with youth identity work. This indigenous praxis was continually in formation, grounded in his day-to-day work with youth and local community struggles. RValdez explains how identity work plays an important part of their work where issues of representation are tied to SOY educational and political work project:

> It's not about lecturing or letting people know—it's about what can we pull out of each other so we can all learn and engage together so I know he was already doing that stuff in prison, outside of prison, then at El Centro where he was doing *Indio/Chicano unity* classes about remembering that Chicanos are *indigenous*. So he was important to that initial thrust of what makes us Chicano—it's remembering the indigenous in us, remembering the earth, remembering the herbs, remembering that we've always been a part of this planet (this land)—no matter what they tell us so he was very important in his writings in making those connections and having us remember and never to forget that we are a part of the earth and we are very much indigenous peoples. And so he was connecting with the people of the Pacific NorthWest, American Indian Movement, and also connecting with all the Latino writers and Chicano writers all over the southwest. They were connecting from the prisons so he already had that network set up (RValdez interview, 10/2007).

RValdez describes how their educational projects like SOY are linked to a recovery of indigenous heritage and practice where the personal is linked to the political, where the politics of representation is tied to politics of organization. Moreover, this work creating empowering subjectivities and identities is traced to Salinas own personal and political transformation based in indigenous movement work.

While indigenity has operated in LGC's work implicitly as PGuajardo notes below, its influence has been more profound especially of late as they have extended their LGC network nationally and internationally. LGC/CLE members partly ground their work on local, place based theories and practice as I have suggested above. As Greunewald (2003) has argued, critical pedagogy of place is a decolonizing practice that aims to recover and renew "traditional non-commodified cultural patterns such as mentoring and intergenerational relationships" (p. 9). As my earlier discussions have shown, LGC's place based praxis focuses on developing these emergent and residual cultural practices as an integral part of their teaching and learning.

LGC's work with Dr. Maenette Nee-Benham was facilitated by a Kellogg foundation grant they received in 2003 that allowed the LGC to extend their model of youth leadership development based on place based approaches to teaching and learning. It has allowed for PGC educators to extend many of the projects they have developed, like their digital storytelling project and place based work beyond their South Texas communities. As Smith (1999) reminds us, storytelling and *testimonios* are two powerful modes of indigenous practice. LGC participants have combined these traditional cultural and educational forms based in Mexicano expressive culture with new modern digital technologies in radically empowering ways as my earlier discussion have shown. PGuajardo shares a story about his parents and the power of story and storytelling that became evident to him when he began to document their personal histories:

> When we started the work of the Llano Grande Center, before we did any oral histories, I thought, okay, I'm going to start with my mother and do this oral history with my mother. That was like 1997, so we're talking about 13/14 years ago. I had been involved in a 14 year oral history with my mother now. …The kinds of stories that my mother always shared with us were very powerful stories. So, I decided I needed to do an oral history with my mother, I got about ten

> installments ….The power of owning the story is a fantastic thing. My mother has changed since she's become a storyteller. She's always been a storyteller but now she's a storyteller with power. That's the difference in this. What the Llano Grande work has allowed us to do is to generate a whole different level of power through the narrative form, including getting kids into college because they tell stories that nobody can challenge (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010).

PGuajardo describes here and elsewhere how he and his brother Miguel began to reconceptualize the power of stories and storytelling as a vehicle for personal and political transformation in the same way that Smith (2006) has described them as tools for individual and collective change for indigenous communities. Smith posits that storytelling and oral histories capture the perspectives of elders and of women and have become an integral part of research of indigenous and other marginalized communities and secondly, that *testimonies* are a cultural and pedagogical vehicle for the recollection of painful events, especially of elders where "events can be related and feelings expressed" (p. 144). These two indigenous practices are powerful forms of knowledge production for LGC and CLE projects through the documentation of Mexicanos' deeply rooted history and culture in this Delta region of the borderlands.

Moreover, CLE participants use storytelling, dialogue and reflection as important relationship-building tools in this space to convivially work through their differences and create shared meaning. These tools provide a framework that encourages personal and civic dialogue amongst its participants and is "the container that holds transformations and the new ideas that emerge" (Nienow in Nee-Benham, 2011; p. 31). In the same way that ASCR and RSA participants strive to theorize and create alternative autonomous spaces in which community, home and academic discourses are fostered, the LGC and CLE participants also engender counterhegemonic forms of praxis. Participants are reconstituting traditional institutions, forms and practices based on impersonal,

bureaucratic and vertical forms of interaction and transforming these into alternative institutions based on indigenous and local knowledges. They are also the spaces for developing new forms of leadership, collectively forged on principles and values that foster committed relationships and networks. And as PGuajardo suggests above, these are spaces where real, imagined and symbolic change can occur for these marginalized communities to counter the discursive and material effects of neoliberalism and globalization.

LGC's place-based theories of epistemology, research and pedagogy that integrate macro/micro integrative theories would seem to reflect Grande's (2004) and Escobar's (2008) observations about the relevance of place and the local. It also represents part of Escobar's idea of localization praxis grounded in subaltern and indigenous place where home and community vie as sites of knowledge production with the academy. These "funds of knowledge" as some scholars have called them, ascribed to household or indigenous knowledges, are produced by laypeople in specific social and cultural contexts based on nonwestern epistemologies (Moll et al., 1992; Quiroz, 1999). Moll et al. (1992) refers to them as culturally specific bodies of knowledge and skills that marginalized communities rely on to survive in contrast to academic discourses that are generally situated in written texts, legal codes and academic canons.

Chapter 5: Analysis

> The *Llano Grande*, we've gotten to the point where the *Llano Grande* work is an idea and it is a *way of life*. So, the Llano Grande work does not just reside in that geographical area, in that place. It's a space, man. So, if we can get to working and moving away from 'I'm doing a project' to 'I'm living my life this way.' It's a total repositioning of the way we live life, the way we see academia. For us, long ago, we became real clear in our thinking that higher education is not linear. Nobody ever said that you need to be eighteen and have a high school degree to begin higher thinking. So for us, *chavalos* were doing it. They were doing it in the classroom, they're doing it at home, they're doing it in their clubs, they're doing it at school, *they're doing it all over the place*. Let's just call it what it is, man. We didn't have the language at that point, language has always been very clumsy, so I think for us we got to a point of using a *different way of knowing*. Emotionally, we understood that the collective was much more powerful than the individual. There was this *collective development, this collective learning, and this collective leadership being constructed* (MGuajardo interview, 3/2010).

> Pintos are at the intersection of our colonial reality and our revolutionary potential (RSalinas, 1996).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter extends my findings and preliminary descriptive analysis in Chapter 4 of the oral narratives, site documents and field reflections that constituted the basis of my data in this study. I first consider my emergent themes in relation to my initial set of research questions and review of the literature surrounding identity formation, pedagogy and social movements. I then consider the implications of my study for activists, educators, and researchers. While the structure I have just laid out gives this last chapter some order and coherence, I also want to invest some messiness in its formal structure

and analysis. I don't present any final closing statements, only speculative propositions in the spirit of an interpretative analysis, and as yet unfinished interdisciplinary and ethnographic project.

As radical epistemological projects linked to social movement discourses and projects that are still ongoing, and social conditions in the schools and communities they work in still persist if not exacerbated by today's global economic crises, there is no closure to their work or my study. No closure gives this study an element of messiness that is frowned upon in traditional qualitative and ethnographic practice where finality is a strived for goal. But for more non-traditional and critical ethnographies that this study strives to replicate, messiness is part and parcel of undisciplining research practices that are valued and sought after (Russel y Rodriguez, 2007; De Lissovoy, 2011). Russel y Rodriguez (2007) suggests one element of this messiness or "undisciplining" process, as she calls it, is the non-traditional practice of mixing the objects of analysis of one's study. For example, I bring different sites and histories of knowledge production into dialogue in my study: formal and informal learning spaces, individual and collective stories and histories, and various multiple contexts. I also include my voice and perspective, not only through my selection and interpretation of these sites and voices, but also as an integral part of the narrative by including my reflections in the opening chapter of this study.

When I began my project roughly three years ago, I sought to answer a set of questions that centered on the epistemological issues and transformations that impacted participant pedagogy and identity practices as Chicana/o activist scholars. I refined my analysis by incorporating new perspectives that emerged throughout my data collection phase in my conversation with participants: what emerged during my interviews and overall in my data collection phase were certain organic themes that structured those

findings that I presented in Chapter 4. I found certain similarities in their pedagogical and political work that led me to consider how these practices represented particular critical standpoints in opposition to more traditional and even some critical perspectives. I found that their educational praxis enabled an epistemological and political standpoint that merged elements of a reframed Chicanisma/o, Chicana/o feminism, indigenism and critical transnationalism such that they represent following autonomous and vernacular forms of knowledge production that are based in alternative epistemological standpoints (De Lissovoy, in press).

My first theme, three case studies of collective activist subject/project, captures how consultants work was rearticulated intellectual work in more radically democratic ways that not only displaced earlier critical paradigms theoretically, but politically and materially as well through new formations of engaged scholarship. Consultants in these spaces were grappling with how to theorize an empowering and emancipatory radical scholarship and pedagogy beyond simply the politics of representation. I provided aspects of that work by tracing the histories, goals and visions of their work in three educational spaces. My second theme, expressions of postmodern Chicana/o pedagogical praxis, describes how their critical pedagogical practices were envisioned by consultants in terms of local, indigenous and place-based practices yet situated in larger social and political contexts. My third theme, reframed indigenity: reconsidering and reconstituting indigenous praxis, explores how consultants grounded these renewed senses of collective and pedagogical practice in indigenous theories and indigenizing practices and other critical transnational discourses.

RESPONDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this section, I revisit my research questions, issues that motivated my investigation, and the context in which they emerged. I also reflect on how these questions eventually became more refined and nuanced throughout the process of my data collection phase and developed into my current themes. As the reader will recall, these research questions sought to examine the nexus between participant formations of activist identities and the power of certain expressive cultural forms used in their pedagogical and political praxis. My framework of inquiry included three questions and a review of selected literature on identity practices and figured worlds, critical pedagogy, feminist and indigenous standpoints and new social movement theory. The following research questions formed part of my preliminary epistemological framework for this study:

1) What is the meaning of "organic intellectual" in the context of the contemporary Chicana/o movement, as represented in educational spaces?

2) What do participants' personal stories tell us about the evolution and transformation of the Chicano/a movement?

3) What do participant's theories and practices of pedagogy and knowledge production reveal about the nature of their social engagement and the formation of their activist identities?

In revisiting the questions and reflecting on their relationship to my emergent themes, I hope to add to my theoretical understanding of these dimensions in consultants'

educational praxis as they sought new ways to conduct their work. Consultants effectively negotiated both academic and community spaces by revisioning their intellectual work and by transforming elements of Chicana/o movement practices using reframed critical pedagogies. They sought to enact more radically democratic collectivities in their teaching, research, and community work. Key to their transformative work was a set of critical discursive and material practices that were based on Mexicana/o, Chicana/o subaltern and feminist epistemological standpoints. In reframing these new collectivities, they articulated new sense of cultural warfare (LIW) and new sense of political organizing still grounded in this emerging translocal Chicana/o discourse linked to new practices of critical indigenities.

My first theme traced the goals and vision of each site by narrating organizational histories of their founding and development as told to me by key participants. Implicit in my consultants stories was a rearticulation of certain organic intellectual practices that suggest a more radical collective subject and project based not just on an epistemological challenge but an ontological reframing as well. Consultants sought a more radical collective project that was based not only on an epistemological critique of knowledge production as the basis collective identity work but on new ontological vision. Mignolo (20000), Escobar, Quijano (2000) and Maldonado-Torres (2007) articulate decolonial projects that suggest how we might work towards a more radical critique of colonial difference that resonates with this collective revisioning. These critics underscore the importance of challenging colonial structures of modernity not only from different epistemic locations but also from the perspective of lived experiences of subaltern communities. By representing critiques and challenges to the lived experiences of

colonization that produce racial and colonial subalterity, a new more emancipatory collective subject and project can emerge (Maldonado-Torres, 2008, p. 242).

1) What is the meaning of "organic intellectual" in the context of the contemporary Chicana/o movement, as represented in educational spaces?

My first research question sought to address how organic intellectualism, as a form of intellectual activist work, was reframed by consultants in the context of their intellectual and community work into new collective subjects and practices. While most of my consultants had self-identified as Chicana/o activist educators, many had rearticulated this self-identity in terms of a reframed Gramscian model of intellectual activism. While the Gramscian model grounds intellectual work in subaltern community engagement, it still rests on the somewhat privileged status of the intellectual in relation to their members of that community, according to some of the consultants I interviewed. The role of the intellectual in traditional Gramscian parlance reconfigures "folkloric" thinking into more rationalist and critical perspective as Callahan reminded me (MCallahan interview, 3/2010).

While certainly a more critical and democratic intellectual practice than traditional pedagogies and political practice, this work is still characterized by a hierarchical relationship between "teacher" and "learner". Academic knowledge that is more highly valued than folkloric knowledge must be transformed into a more critical perspective according to Gramscian theory thus maintaining the epistemological authority of the intellectual, and by extension the academy where the intellectual was trained. Drawing on the more communal residual practices of traditional Mexicana/o and

indigenous communities as well as new modes of more radical collective practices enacted in recent indigenous and decolonial social movements, consultants sought to engage in a more radically democratic intellectual and political work. This reframed collectivity and project was based on educational praxis that linked academic and community work. It also rested on the idea of validating local indigenous epistemic locations that privileged the perspectives and understandings of local cultures and knowledges.

From Organic to Incarnate Intellectuals

Participants in the LGC, RSA and ASCR also reframed the meaning of organic intellectual practice in the context of the recent critiques of Chicana feminism and the indigenous theories and practices of local and transnational movements that has reconstituted contemporary Chicana/o movement theory and practice. ASCR consultants were influenced by EZLN and Zapatisma/o discourse that articulated a democratic social relations they called "incarnate intellectualism" that captured this reframed and more critical intellectualism. This work required continual self-reflectivity based on convivial and collaborative group work. ASCR revisioned this collective subject and project in terms of reframed organic intellectualism that was a more self-reflexive positionality and a more self-reflexive strategy of engagement and ethnographic practice. Convivial practice creates a space where participants continually negotiate and challenge each other's privileged status, suggestive of the feminist practice that Florez has called "tactics de subjectivation" (qtd. in Escobar, 2008).

ASCR consultants pressed for more non-hierarchical interactive practices in their collective work. I noted how *talleres* were facilitated and led by different members so

that all served as session leaders at any given time. These workshops, modeled on indigenous social movement work in Mexico, tackled a multitude of topics from discussions of how to conduct collaborative research work to developing more learned-centered course curriculum. RSA consultants created learner-centered spaces in their SOY workshops where youth became actively engaged in teaching and learning activities. In the same way, LGC practice enabled high school students at Edcouch-Elsa High School to assume more self-authority in their own education by giving them the resources and tools to become educators and community researchers themselves. RSA and LGC consultants actively worked to center youth knowledge as a basis for their personal and political development such that youth became active producers of knowledge as researchers, teachers, poets, writers and published authors. This work took on distinctly indigenous pedagogical styles that focused on building relationships between members and on strategies for supporting, protecting and healing each other before engaging in more prescriptive educational activities.

Consultants responded to this new sense of collective project as a response to new expressions of postmodernity that they were facing in the schools and academies. In the schools, LGC consultants had described the effects of new federal legislation that had extended banking forms of education that expanded standardized testing and accountability assessment measures. In the university, as corporatization and neoliberalism gained traction, students, faculty and staff in ethnic and women's studies programs continued to face escalating assaults on their academic projects. In general, critical scholars were assaulted by federal legislation that challenged new qualitative research perspectives for lacking scientific merit. An important part of ASCR's critique

of this graduate training and apprenticeship model challenged the instrumentalization or research practices that valued these scientific and statistical approaches to study.

In response to these tendencies, consultants sought more socio critical approaches in their educational praxis. These socio critical models validated decolonial, cultural studies, narrative inquiry models and methods and new researcher/participant relations. These practices sought to stand on its head traditional forms of participant observation into a more self-reflexive strategy of engagement and ethnographic practice that valued local indigenous knowledge and practice as Joao Vargas (2008) has posited. Vargas refers to this ethnographic practice as "observant participation" where intellectuals must recognize their privileged status as intellectuals, and that local knowledge of the communities be accessed in collaboration with and by the communities themselves. These new, more collaborative projects implied new and more democratic forms of research practices that challenged traditional and even critical research methodologies and methods towards more democratic practice.

Extending Intellectual Practice Through Transnational Networking

The notion of organic intellectualism was also rearticulated in terms of organizational praxis. I suggested above that as knowledge projects, consultants sought to extend their movement work along networks that shared their epistemological standpoints. De Lissovoy (2008) has suggested such projects that merge into *compound standpoints* offer more emancipatory possibilities. This idea also resonates with other scholars (Castells, 2006; Escobar, 2008) who similarly argue for new postmodern formations based on, say the Zapatista model for example, that influenced the work of many of these consultants. These collective subjects/projects were reframed by

participation in transnational networks that departed from traditional leftist forms of international solidarity work as these scholars contend. The ASCR, RSA/Resistencia and LGC as I suggested drew political inspiration from transnational movements occurring in Mexico such as Zapatismo and the EZLN movement in Mexico that were impacting all sectors of the country.

For the most part, mass movement and leftist coalition politics have given way for these consultants and spaces to more localized, dynamic and situated forms of educational and social change that at times can be extended via loosely formed regional, national and international networks and assemblages as I described above (Castells, 2006; Escobar, 2008). All shared a strong sense that their academic and intellectual work should be grounded in community concerns as in the traditional meaning of organic intellectualism. ASCR consultants for example adopted the *encuentro* model of organizing, more dynamic and situational response to addressing local community issues. João Vargas also describes these new forms of networking as part of a renewed sense of political organizing where local and spontaneous resistance replaced large mass movement politics of the 1960s and 1970s (2008).

The pressing need to explore wider horizons of understanding and action is a fundamental message offered by these organizations. The exploration of wider horizons is manifest in several ways: in the establishment of dialogue according to basic principles of communicative rationality; in the attempts to understand, draw on, and at the same time expand given racial classifications; and in the formation of effective, local and global-based social movements. Widening horizons means searching for deep historical roots and broad social structures and connecting these to personal and collective action aimed at building alternative modes of sociability at home and abroad (2008).

Consultants envisioned these organizational networks that were based on convivial, non-hierarchical and collaborative models of engagement and interaction in these spaces. They also expanded the more limiting collective identity practices of earlier Chicanisma/o by linking these identity practices in more dynamic and flexible constructions. Organizationally, they sought out transnational networks that informed their local work as well linked by shared interests in critical ideological and material practice. As I had suggested above, a key ideological discourse that wove throughout all three was based on indigenous, subaltern and postcolonial theories and practices. These organizational forms suggest network affiliations that are more flexible and situational, rather than necessarily lined along long-term organizational relationships. Keck and Sikkink (1998) have called these contemporary political formations, *transnational advocacy networks* that are organized around shared interests in social change and/or in shared political ideologies rather than based on long standing political and organizational affiliations. These new formations suggest again the reframing of organic intellectual practices that are more critically responsive to our contemporary and postmodern social and political realities. These new senses of intellectual practice are both local and transnational in origin and in practice as I have contended.

2) What do participants' personal stories tell us about the evolution and transformation of the Chicano/a movement?

> Storytelling has been a kind of medicine to heal the wounds of pain caused by racial oppression. The story of one's condition leads to the realization of how one came to be oppressed. . . . (and) provides a way to communicate the experiences and realities of the oppressed (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995; pp. 57-58).

My second research question explored consultants' personal narratives in relation to Chicana/o movement ideological discourses and practices. Consultants noted how their lives have been impacted by Chicana/o movement discourses in terms of their personal, political and organizational choices. Consultants sought to more fully integrate their academic work to this critical perspective. Consultants' stories expressed a profound desire to reimagine their work by rearticulating elements of Chicanisma/o that based their political work as Chicana/a activist educators on daily, lived experiences and struggles of community. They imagined and practiced their intellectual work as MGuajardo suggested above by linking their private and public spheres in their daily practice. This reimagines Chicano activist work as grounded in Chicano epistemological standpoint that values more public form of intellectual practice (MCallahan interview, 3/2010).

This critique of intellectual practice also challenges contemporary intellectual practice in ethnic studies programs that focuses on representational and cultural critique absent of any material engagement in local community struggles. This revisionining of contemporary critical practice links public and private spheres in dialogical and dialectical daily praxis and challenges what RSalinas called "drive by research" that marks current intellectual work.

Their perspectives of intellectual work as fully public expressions underscores an important thematic that emerged in their stories. Consultants described how their individual political development was intimately connected to larger cultural community and collective experiences. These connections to group experiences were sometimes explicit, sometime implicit, but none-the-less were integral to their political development as Chicana/o activist educators. I noted how some consultants like VMartinez and the Guajardos had first indicated an emerging political consciousness while they were young

fostered by parents, grandparents and siblings. The Guajardos described how stories they heard as youngsters were particularly formative cultural experiences not yet fully formed politically as emergent or nascent critical consciousness that Williams (1977) "structures of feeling" notion evokes.

As they became more engaged politically in their academic and community work, these consultants described how these experiences became more developed into a more fully formed critical political consciousness. VMartinez explains how her mother's work in educational change while she was in middle and high school explains her intellectual and political work as a Chicana historian as I describe below. Like other consultants stories, she articulated her educational work in larger social and political contexts, like earlier Chicana/o scholar and community activists who saw education as an emancipatory project. However, these contemporary Chicana/o activist educators imagined and practiced a renewed Chicanisma/o that was even more expansive and democratic. Their revisioning of this practice was based on a more complexly figured sense of difference beyond race and ethnicity than earlier movement activist practice. Their collective project rested on an expanded notion of differences that considered gender, sexuality, coloniality and indigenity as I have suggested.

Their stories also underscore a sustained Chicanisma/o through localized and intergenerational political micro cohorts much as the feminist movement has done (Whittier, 1995). Their renewed discourse and practice build on Chicana/o feminist and queer standpoints of the 1980s and 1990s that critiqued it patriarchal and homophobic elements. Transforming these critical and residual discourses, they rethought Chicanismo/a through more contemporary and postmodern categories such that a singular Chicana/o discursivity was transformed into a more complexly figured emergent

discursive formation. If we consider these sites as responses/expressions of Chicana/o movement and identities/communities, both individual and collective, their identity practices can perhaps be read as representing new generations of activism and new understandings of Chicana/o identity and community (Whittier, 1995).

LGC consultants shared how their digital storytelling projects had enacted differing visions collectivizing from earlier movement practices. For LGC educators and youth, Chicana/o activism was reframed as a collective project that strengthened family and community relationships. These projects resulted in building intergenerational alliances between youth and elderly in ways that they had not envisioned when first embarking on this work. As OCardoso had earlier noted, youth participants began to really understand what it meant to build a relationship with your grandfather and grandmother and how their project began to bridge the disconnect between schools and communities that traditional schooling was fostering through standardized and high stakes testing approaches (OCardoso interview, 5/2010).

Rethinking New Forms of Chicana/o Activist Practice

Participant's stories also indicated that renewed conceptions of organic intellectual work, while articulated in personal and individual experiences, also contained a collective aspect to their subjectivity and identity formation. Their individual stories were usually about some sort of group work and collective practice that framed their activist formation. VMartinez for example discussed how her mother and sisters had impacted her in ways that she had not previously considered:

> She was actually, this is why I say, maybe my politicization happened earlier that, I am aware of. She was very active in the community in ways that I didn't

> understand were activist (and) "doing things that I now see as beyond just what's going on with her daughters you know and kind of a concern for the level of education and the kind of environment that exists in schools (VMartinez interview, 3/2010).

VMartinez relates how her mother and older sister's political involvement in Chicana/o organizations were early political influences, already signaling an embryonic political consciousness in formation. Other participants shared similar experiences regarding the impact of college courses, professors and minority support programs that were created in the wake of social movement activism and the reforming of schooling institutions. Their stories underscored how thoroughly linked were their individual and collective being-in-the-world revealing processes of intellectual formation that seemed to mark their *conscientizacion* as collective in nature and based in daily convivial and collaborative praxis. Incarnated intellectualism as Prakash and Esteve (1998) envision this practice, suggests attention and privileging of vernacular forms of knowledge as the basis for more critical and emancipatory forms of pedagogical and organizational work. These local "funds of knowledge" that VMartinez subconsciously drew from were embedded in her family's daily lives and practices rather than based on any "scientific knowledge".

MGuajardo had similarly expressed how their work sought new understandings as the basis for their reframed intellectual work which built on earlier Chicanismo yet was rearticulated via a new more critical discourse. He suggested that a departure from traditional disciplinary concepts and methods was one starting point that incorporated local epistemologies and ontologies as the basis for their critical and decolonial work. This new discourse and language based in stories and storytelling recovers local vernacular expressive cultures and knowledges as the basis for renewed structures of knowing and action.

In some respects, these "new" emergent forms of local, culturally based collective practice were really residual practices, based on a return to the original intent of *El Plan de Santa Barbara* that called for creating new autonomous and alternative spaces outside the academy and schools. This strategy represented a return to institutions that were organically tied to local communities and an intellectual practice organically tied to local communities. ASCR's strategy of community engagement for example, graphically represented in Figure 1, Appendix A, demonstrates how consultants rearticulated this practice. Through a dialogic process of analysis, research, and action ASCR consultants facilitated "intercultural dialogue and community regeneration" towards a "reclamation of commons" as this figure represents (MCallahan email correspondence, 2009).

As I suggested earlier, consultants were extending the already critical work of feminist and queer intellectuals that had challenged the Chicano movement's patriarchal and homophobic elements. To this critique, they also adopted decolonial and indigenous critical traditions that were inspired by recent indigenous social movements of the south that sought a more radical reframing of contemporary Chicana/o movement discourse. Their stories underscored this sense of reframed Chicanisma/o that more thoroughly integrated private and public spheres. This critical discourse is part of the interpretative universe that includes critical globalization, transnational, translocalism, indigenous and decolonial studies that decenter our traditional understandings of US lived experiences of racial and ethnic minorities away from a strictly nation-state focus and identity (Limon, 2008).

To this end, ASCR consultants sought to reform institutional practices of ethnic studies program that had lost their critical edge, and instead replicated the more dominant institutional practices of the academy. They sought to revitalize Chicanisma/o by

organically linking their intellectual work to community activism, adopting Chicana feminist and queer practices and linking this work to decolonial and indigenous discourses and movements. LGC consultants like MGuajardo had critiqued collective building practices that failed to sustain the movement by failing to focus on intergenerational alliances as they sought to do. LGC participants responded by rebuilding the movement through the formation of generational cohorts that relied on engaging youth, community and family in ongoing work as the basis for collective practice. These multigenerational cohorts are the foundation for building sustainable communities of practice that are convivial and collective. Similarly, RSA consultants had reclaimed more critical cultural work that anticipated these new postmodern collectivities and projects. Earlier, RSalinas educational and political work in the prisons was refashioned into "pinto" forms of pedagogy and political organizing.

Local, Situational and Place-based Funds of Knowledge

While stories and storytelling have become powerful tools for LGC practice as participants described in their narratives, I found the origins of these practices not in academic treatises or discourses but in the lessons learned from parents and grandparents. The Guajardos were very explicit about naming these practices as home and family practices that upon later reflection revealed their power for the Guajardos. These expressive forms of cultural production have become the epistemological and ontological foundation for their teaching research and political work.

While Urrieta's (2008) study located most transformative experiences in these activist college experiences, either in significant classes or through participation in political or cultural organizations, my consultants frequently pointed to earlier

transformative events and individuals. As I indicated above, VMartinez shared such an experience about her mother's influence in her nascent development that she "now recognize(s) (as a) feminist perspective of raising daughters and of pushing for these educational rights…" (VMartinez interview, 3/2010). While her c*onscientizacion* came later in college, aided by her participation in college support programs that were created as a result of 1960s and 1970s movements, her activist formation was obviously impacted by her mother's political work. M. and F. Guajardo also suggested that their activist influences were incipient as early as grade school, where they experienced racism educational practices in the schools and through the stories that their parents and grandparents had shared with them that underscored the power of stories and storytelling in transforming consciousness.

> Sister Lakes (in South Texas in the 1960's) had a school that had a basement, and then a first floor and a second floor. The bus would drive us to the side of the school where all the migrant kids (all Mexicans, all migrant and from the labor camp) would get off the bus, and we would walk through the side door and go down to the basement. … We never went to the first floor except for lunch. We never saw the second floor. We never interacted with the local kids (PGuajardo interview, 4/2010).

These experiences based in local funds of knowledge shared over the kitchen table and in personal events and experiences that represent embodied and affective forms of knowledge were transformative. Coupled later with their study of the Mexicano and Chicano history in college, they say, helped refine their already emerging activist identities. These personal experiences and lessons drawn from their experiential knowledge based on autochthonous epistemologies has become the philosophical foundation for their pedagogical and political work at the LGC. RSalinas also articulated

this idea of situating our political and educational work in local subaltern epistemologies. His notion of *barriology* captures this practice shared here by LMendoza:

> *barriology* uses this idea that each community is distinct and has a source of power…they have a ground-up methodology, a ground-up rhetoric to respond to the world. (A) (b)arriological (approach) would mean taking a more assets-based approach, an affirmative response to the world around you, exercising your agency. You're using a more ethnically-specific, historically-specific logic or ethos to act in the world (LMendoza interview, 2/2010).

RSalinas distinguished this process from *barriozation* to describe the process "where people are disempowered, ghettoized, and consigned to certain spaces and limitations" (LMendoza interview, 2/2010). In all cases, these reflections suggest that that a reframed sense of Chicansima/o is at work here that foregrounds local subaltern Mexicana/o and Chicana/o epistemological standpoint coupled with critical deocolonial discourse and movement practices, as the basis for new movement work. Barriology also captures how Salinas and other consultants I interviewed sought to extend their cultural and political work as Chicana/o activist educators in genuinely more radically emancipatory projects. This more radical epistemological project suggests that systematic knowledge production emerges from a reconceptualization of being that ruptures and upsets the existing order (Maldonado Torres, 2007; De Lissovoy, in press).

In sum, the capturing of participants personal stories underscores how narrative inquiry and oral histories as methodology generate important insights for critical research studies. It provided for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the linkages between their personal and political lives that revealed upon reflection how integrally linked were these dimensions of their lives. Storytelling as methodology also seamlessly blended into their pedagogical practice, particularly for LGC consultants who used the

cultural artifact to base much of their critical and place based pedagogical work. As the Guajardo's frequently underscored in their interviews and in their writings, storytelling became the basis not only for their pedagogy but also for their identity work that reconfigures their Chicanisma/o using local and indigenous discursive practice.

3) What do participant's theories and practices of pedagogy and knowledge production reveal about the nature of their social engagement and the formation of their activist identities?

My third research question focused on examining what participant theories and practices of pedagogy and knowledge production reveal about the nature of their social engagement and the formation of their activist identities. Their pedagogical theories and practices suggested a reframing of critical and culturally relevant pedagogies that were situated in local culture practices yet linked to larger transnational discourses and movement practices to produce new collective subjects/identities. Critical and culturally relevant pedagogy were reframed to consider both local and transnational discursive and material practices. Chicana/o pedagogy was articulated in these spaces as pinto pedagogy, place-based pedagogy or insurgent learning whose educational practices were all situated in local cultures and histories at the same time informed by larger critical, transnational influences.

While consultants' conception of education as an arena of activism and site of struggle clearly resonates with movement activist practice, my findings suggest new understandings that manifest in expanding our thinking of critical and culturally grounded pedagogies towards more democratic and emancipatory expressions. Like earlier Chicanisma/o, their pedagogy was premised on rejecting the lacunae of subaltern

Mexicana/o and Chicana/o histories and literatures. They also sought to address this absence by seeking new more culturally relevant practices grounded in local cultures and knowledges. While some progress was made in the past forty years since the educational reforms demanded by Chicana/o movement activists, we still see that important contributions are still absent in most K12 curriculum and even less so in pedagogical practices situated in those cultures. In fact, as much critical scholarship contends, we have seen a retrenchment in progressive schooling marked by educational discourses that favor standards and testing models of learning (Valenzuela, 1999; Urrieta, 2008; Foster, 2000; De Lissovoy, 2008; Grunewald, 2003).

This concern with rearticulating institutional spaces raised important discussions around space and place for all participants. Whether framed as spaces of autonomy or in terms of local, place based practices, these discussions generally focused on the need for spaces outside traditional institutional structures and in generating local, autochthonous theories and practices. LMendoza describes Resistencia in this way:

> Well, with Resistencia, the real value of Resistencia Bookstore, for Austin, over the last 30 years, has been less as a bookstore, per say, because the range of books, the depth of books they have there is pretty damn small. But it's nevertheless, the idea of it as a cultural center, as an alternative space for thinking outside the box, a place for people to speak freely about their dis-ease, their discomfort, or their anger at society. It became a place of empowerment, of articulation of a critique and of a refinement of a critique because people go there and challenge each other, explore new ideas, listen to other voices, it's very non-mainstream in that way. That's been the crucial way that it's played and yes, because it's a Chicano center, Native center, multi-ethnic, and because of the many values it imparts, it becomes a magnet as a safe space to explore and challenge and critique (LMendoza interview, 2/2010).

LMendoza very clearly articulates the need for alternative and autonomous safe spaces that provide not only a means of educational and political engagement but where

healing and surviving for its participants are enabled. LMendoza's comments also suggest an expansion of pedagogical practice in a more critical direction. As I suggested earlier, Freirian and Gramscian critical pedagogy, for example, are premised on enacting individual and group transformation achieved principally through the intervention of an intellectual. In traditional Marxian terms, popular or folkoric understanding, depending on Freirain or Gramscian parlance, is transformed into more critical, scientific, albeit rationalist, understanding. Similarly, cultural relevant pedagogy posits that students attain critical consciousness when one set of cultures, histories and literatures, that is local and subaltern knowledges, are practiced in place of traditional and dominant cultural forms that function to reproduce existing social relationships of inequality. However, these participants argue for a more deeply democratic pedagogy that is more plural and complex and considers learning and knowledge production as radically collaborative.

I noted in Chapter 4 how these educators worked to create educational spaces that drew from multiple and diverse sources, from local Mexicana/o community knowledge and cultures and from other decolonial and indigenous perspectives. These new forms of pedagogy called for more democratic and emancipatory organization of teacher/student relationship that shifts the authority of this relationship towards the learner drawing on that knowledge base. Consultants facilitated that work through various pedagogical practices as I described: ASCR insurgent learning deploys *encuentros* and *talleres* to support Chicana/o graduate learning; RSA educators used pinto pedagogy situated in local contextual work that incorporated youth knowledge with important insights drawn from RSalinas early work in federal prisons in the 1960s and 1970s; and LGC educators used place-based pedagogy also uses locally produced curricular content and pedagogy that links community and schools into a community of knowledge producers. These

forms of learning, teaching and research, grounded on the idea of a "community of equals", suggest how critical and cultural pedagogies are deepened in important directions by these consultants. They were also organically and situationally grounded in daily, lived experiences and practices as DPerez described when explaining their place-based pedagogy (DPerez interview, 5/2010).

These more dynamic and situational practices also drew from a rich local tradition of educational activism in Texas. Recovering these residual movement practices was an important reframing practice and underscored how where Mexicana/o and Chicana/o educators have always considered the nexus of education and issues of language and migration. LGC participants linked their place-based pedagogy to the educational and community challenges they faced in their South Texas community of Edcouch-Elsa. ASCR educators also grounded their work in both the local struggles of East Austin communities focused particularly on educational challenges faced by youth.

Consultants responded to the importance of pedagogy and activism extending critical and culturally relevant practices in new ways. They sought a more culturally grounded relationship to community in ways that moved beyond service learning practices. Their digital storytelling projects were examples of educational practices education sought to transform community in real tangible ways through economic development projects that addressed local Edcouch Elsa issues. Their pedagogies also drew from local, vernacular epistemologies to organize their classroom practices. Narrative poetry and storytelling were two pedagogical tools and practices used by RSA and LGC consultants based in a Mexicana/o and Chicana/o expressive culture with a resistive and revisionist tradition to Anglo dominant culture.

Stories and storytelling with it roots in local Mexicana/o history and culture served for LGC educators as an important mediating function to recapture local memories and in the process reframe official histories. They also functioned as powerful mediating tools for the formation of more critical and agentic individual and group identities particularly when linked with local contentious struggles. As Levinson and Holland (1996) point out, it is "(t)hrough the production of cultural forms, created within the structural constraints of sites such as schools, subjectivities forms and agency develops" (p. 14). In these spaces, consultants transformed these residual expressive practices into new cultural artifacts to generate new understandings and political strategies by which to confront dominant institutional structures.

Consultants also responded to contemporary dominant academic and schooling practices by creatively envisioning new alternative and autonomous spaces where this work could be nurtured. These spaces, while outside traditional institutions, still sought to connect universities and schools with local communities and to further connect to new organizations and networks whose participants shared their vision and practice. This revised older coalition building beyond rigid political formations to ones that were more flexible and dynamic as I described above and in Chapter 4.

In summary, consultants sought to reframe organic intellectual practice towards more emancipatory possibilities. Incarnated intellectualism for example, as ASCR consultants had articulated this practice, sought a more engaged and collaborative practice, in teaching, research and in their political organizing. Consultants linked these practices dialogically and dialectically seeking in their critical pedagogical work forms of *conscientizacion* that were even more liberatory than proposed by traditional Freirian or Gramscian practice. Beyond an emancipatory epistemological project, these consultants

also sought new ontological practices that grounded their work in indigenous discourses and material practices as I have argued. They sought not only new ways of knowing grounded in these subaltern epistemological practices, but also reimagined new ways of being quite distinct from western eurocentric and whitestream modes.

IMPLICATIONS OF MY STUDY

> On the other hand, in a different sense the notion that the intellectual serves as a social inoculation against 'dangerous' ideas is all too apt: arguably this is what happened to the New Left, whose revolutionary intentions were sublimated into careers of perpetual criticism, both in academia and in more public journals (Jacoby, 2000). But this is precisely the condition in which the Left is in crisis! (Norrie, retrieved 5/3/11 from http://secollective.wordpress.com/sil-and-the-intellectual/).

In this last section, I reflect on some of the implications of my study that considers how participants at the LGC, ASCR and RSA are reframing the nexus between university, schooling and community practices. Although these implications are presented separately, I want to suggest that they be considered linked dialogically in the same way that consultants understand their work as dialogically and dialectically linked. An important linkage, of course, was how consultant saw their work as organically tied to broader contexts outside formal classroom practices. Consultants worked to address the disconnect between formal and informal spaces of learning and research that critical scholars like Grunewald (2003) have noted: "the heavy emphasis in educational research on school and classroom practices reinforces institutional practices that keep teachers and student isolated from places outside of schools" (p. 10). Their work suggests how we

might imagine more fully collective and collaborative organizations of authority between institutional sites like universities and schools and local subaltern communities.

I first illustrate the ways in which consultants have rethought activist practice that links their educational and political work and individual and collective identity practices. Consultants created alternative and autonomous institutional, social and cultural sites that facilitated more complexly figured self-representations to counter the erasures of difference of our subaltern Mexicano and Chicana/o communities and transform delimiting categories. Second, for educators, reframed critical and culturally relevant pedagogies offered new perspectives on theses educational discourses by proposing local and place-based approaches to teaching and learning. Storytelling was an important cultural tool used in recovering lost histories and as the building of more empowering individual and collective identities. Third, my findings also suggest the importance of more radically collective and collaborative forms of research practices that rearticulate ethnographic practices towards more local, indigenous epistemological and ethical practices that value critical and indigenous cultures and knowledges. This approach to research also turns on its head the traditional social relations of researcher/participant by privileging participation over observation in ethnographic practice, as Vargas (2008) has proposed, that puts community needs first over academic outcomes.

Implications for Activists

This first section briefly describes some concrete lessons for activists and is organized thematically as follows: 1) inadequacy of traditional conceptions of organic intellectualism, 2) the importance of new organizational networks, 3) education and

pedagogy as linked to activism, 4) alternative and autonomous institutions, and 5) understanding survival as resistance.

Inadequacy of Traditional Conceptions of Organic Intellectualism

Consultants sought new discourses and practices to articulate their intellectual work in the academies and linking them to their community activism. As Beverly argues, "the inadequacy of the models of intellectual and political protaganist that correspond to the period of liberation struggle in the sixties in which many of us were formed" (qtd in Jose Rabasa, 1997). Rabasa and Beverley underscore here the lessons from Zapatismo and the EZLN movement that articulated new senses of intellectual work for community activists, lessons that were adopted by many of the consultants in these spaces. This appropriation of indigenous discourses came to significantly inform their pedagogical and identity practices and challenge the epistemological authority of this older leftist discourse and assert in its place a local, subaltern understanding of critical agency. The body of knowledge that emerges from this work, in both subaltern Mexicana/o and Chicana/o studies would constitute this intellectual work as one more intervention in insurgent movements.

As I have shown, contemporary activist practice as these consultants envision it call for new modes of intellectual practice and modes of organizing. Consultants suggested that translocal practices that focus on local place-based work are always already informed by larger global discursive and political work. The Guajardos for example point to Ritzer's work on micro/micro analysis as the basis for their research projects. RSA and ASCR consultants also suggest the importance of transnational

discourse and material practices that informs their local projects as critical to their success as activist scholars.

The Importance of New Organizational Networks

The building of collective project and subject by consultants, of new political strategies and new forms of organization was partially enacted through local, indigenous and transnational cultural practices and artifacts. They enabled the building of new forms of organizations, dynamic and autonomous formations: as temporary autonomous zones of situated learning that MCallahan articulated above, for example; or as space for a new, expanded politics of identity practices that works to bridge multiple subaltern cultural communities, as Mendoza indicated in his discussion of Resistencia Bookstore. These presented new, more dynamic, and convivial forms of solidarity in strategic relationship with other non-mainstream and alternative voices that might enact more structural forms of political change and more radical collectivities. Olguin (2008), Gomez (2008) and other scholars have noted in his study of early movement political discourse, Chicana/os activists always consider their local struggles in the context of global and international politics but today are reconfigured to account for changing social and political realities that neoliberal capitalism has created.

These Chicana/o activist scholars also draw linkages between the local and global that continue to forge alliances but perhaps in less statist and more flexible political formations as I have suggested. In his study of the Chicano/a movement in prisons for example, AGomez has noted an already emergent political consciousness that linked local and global struggles into "a form of 'localized internationalism'" (2008, p. 79). While this was evidenced by their traditional political alliances; Puerto Rican

Independence, the American Indian Movement, and the Black Power movement locally and anticolonial struggles in Latin America and elsewhere these movement activists draw inspiration from international networks that rely on internet technologies to help them maintain mutual support for each others struggles.

This means that the old forms of networking based on new left mass movement politics of the 1960s and 1970s are passé. New postmodern forms of solidarity work and political interaction are necessary to respond to these new social and political realities that postmodernity has wrought. These are local, spontaneous forms of resistance or assemblages as Escobar had posited that when extended outward are linked with other transnational political projects. Or through the "widening of horizons" as Vargas (2008) explains who defines "identities in accordance with an inclusive and radical political praxis, a praxis that searches, persistently, for greater equality and justice beyond the physical and ideological limitations defined by rigid hierarchies based on race, gender, and sexuality. Widening horizons, finally, means questioning and moving beyond local and national borders" (pp. 177-78).

This idea of political organization as a "widening of horizons" according to Vargas implies an expanding sense of identity politics beyond the essentialized qualities that old forms assumed in the 1970s. This practice also suggests the bridging of micro and macro, local and global dimensions, and local contentious practice with larger historical and transnational struggles as all consultants articulated in our conversation about their political work: the sort of micro and macro based networks that the LGC consultants have established with CLE organizations; the transnational networking of ASCR and the ZLN/Zapatismo network; and the RSalinas' life-long struggle linking East Austin activist work with indigenous national and international solidarity. These more

postmodern and loosely defined assemblages are the kind of *transnational advocacy networks* that Keck and Sikkink (1998), political formations organized around critical subaltern standpoints based on shared social, cultural and political ideologies.

This also suggests that activists and activist scholars consider a rereading of the Chicana/o movement in terms that Whittier (1995) had described the feminist movement. She explains that the feminist movement has persisted as local and generational micro cohort expressions that have evolved over time and reformed based on changing social conditions. This suggests a reading of this and other social movements as not necessarily evolutionary and teleological with clearly articulated origins and endings but as continuing expressions of local contentious practices throughout the 1980s and 1990s to the present. In terms of concrete organizational practices, consultants stressed the importance of intergenerational work between youth and community elders as key to the success of their projects. I have already suggested this in describing how MGuajardo underscored an organizational weakness of some early Chicana/o movement activism due to this lack of focus on intergenerational relationship building between new and older activists. This intergenerational work is a focus of LGC and RSA/Resistencia practice and key to their success and sustainability that suggest key lessons for future social movement work.

Education and Pedagogy is Linked to Activism

The Chicano movement has always been motivated by struggles over educational access in schools and universities. A major submovement within *el movimiento* in addition to labor and political rights focused on the reformation of educational institutions. Schooling activists wanted more egalitarian curriculum and inclusion into all

aspect of schooling life. Chicana/o academics wanted to expand the intellectual canon and create new institutions that also included our literatures, histories and cultures. However, in the past forty years since the height of mass movement politics, we have witnessed a period of retrenchment and scale back to pre movement era as public schools had been resegregated into the haves and have-nots through de facto segregationist polices and practices (Apple, 2006; Kozol, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999; Noguera, 2005). And many ethnic studies programs had veered from more critically engaged discourses and material practice and have begun replicating those very same dominant institutional practices that early movement activists had criticized. As many critical ethnic studies scholars including these consultants, have argued, critical work in the academy means more than a representational politic of engagement. Real critical work happens when strong and truly collaborative linkages with local grassroots movements are fostered and sustained. Particularly now, when our academies and especially our ethnic, women and queer studies programs are under assault by political and cultural forces from the right, we need more radical models of academic and political engagement that these projects provide.

Alternative and Autonomous Institutions

Consultants in these spaces generally agreed that new alternative spaces were important (Ellsberg, 2005) to respond to growing fragmentation of our communities and schools where participants could rebuild community and collectively respond to these new social realities. These projects also reimagined different ways of doing activist research and education by articulating alternative, autonomous educational and research sites as legitimate spaces for knowledge production. Participants negotiated academic

and community boundaries by creating hybrid, third spaces that challenge the epistemological authority of the university and formal schooling institutions.

The LGC research center was founded in the South Texas community of Edcouch-Elsa, a predominantly working class and Mexicana/o and Chicana/o region of Texas. Their research center provides an educational space where youth, community and teachers enact the collaborative work that I've described above. ASCR consultants, also predominantly Mexicano and Chicano graduate students, worked in spaces also outside the university in east and South Austin communities that provided a more engaged level of intellectual cultural and political immersion. In July 1997 for example, APSB/ASCR participants organized a broad-based planning committee that brought together over one hundred Austin area community and university activists. Modeled after the Zapatista *encuentros* in Chiapas, the *Austin Encuentro* sought to create a political space where local social change constituencies could dialogue and collaborate using *coyuntura* analysis.

These spaces facilitated dynamic collaboration across a wide number of constituencies and organizations where they could successfully merge their intellectual work and community activism and create a network of interlnked community activist councils. These consultants, echoing Ellsworth (2005) and others, contend that alternative and autonomous institutions outside formal spaces of teaching and learning are necessary for real critical work to occur. The success of these consultants' work attest to this organizational and pedagogical practice that frees them to serve community interests and gain outcomes that are not always in sync with dominant institutional expectations. The assault on our subaltern communities by new quantified and standardized models of education is just one expression of the limits of traditional institutional discourses and material practices that these consultants are challenging in their work.

Understanding Survival as Resistance

Many of the participants described these sites as safe or sacred spaces that provided them with a respite from their daily struggles and to survive the frequently alienating experiences they faced in schools and universities. ASCR participants underscored the irony of the academy that purported to provide "a unique site for the flourishing of unalienated labor" where in reality academic work and the dissertation process especially was "often an intolerable alienating experience" (Bahl and Callahan, 1995). AGomez also underscores the importance of the ASCR for helping him survive the academy: "I wouldn't have survived the academy without the advanced seminar. I wouldn't have known how to define or come to terms how we, as a collective subject sort of had, if you will, plans for the intentions of this space in terms of political formation but also plans as people. I wouldn't be where I am, …". I heard this sentiment expressed as well by Resistencia/SOY educators, cultural artists, students and community at the hundreds of activities that I have attended and participated in at Resistencia. These more spiritual and affective elements of political work in activist spaces is frequently overlooked in social movement analysis and provides an opportunity for investigative research to explore. I propose that new research focus on how activist work provides participants to collectively respond and come to terms with institutional micro aggressions they face daily.

This political strategy that posits survival as a mode of resistance is especially salient given our contemporary socio economic and political realities where subaltern communities of color are continually under assault and even small victories need to be nurtured and celebrated. By acknowledging the importance of healing as a key moment

of political struggle, consultants underscore how the politics of affect and hope can sustain us and help these communities negotiate the daily micro aggressions that impact our communities. There is also an indigenous element to this reframed notion of activism and resistance that focuses on matters of our body's well being. RSA/Resistencia consultants begin their activities and events first by performing ancestral rituals "that restores harmony and equilibrium to one's social relations," a practice that models the intellectual work of Zapatismo according to Jose Rabasa. (1997; p. 401). These group practices that RSalinas first introduced at Resistencia on its founding, and still practiced today, help situate and guide participants through the disequilibrium and fragmenting effects of postmodernity. And as this cultural work is always already contextualized through a radical Chicana/Indio politic, it also represents, I argue, an epistemological and ontological challenge to eurocentric forms of authority and practice.

Implications for Educators

This section briefly describes some concrete lessons for educators as they go about their work of teaching and organizing 1) Reframing critical and culturally relevant practices 2) New cultural and collective identity practices; 3) Storytelling as pedagogical, cultural and political practice.

Reframing Critical and Culturally Relevant Pedagogies

Rather than basing teaching and learning on standardized educational models and assessments solely on quantitative metrics, consultants sought localized and culturally situated models of instruction, thus revisioning education as a liberatory practice for

educational and social change. They articulated new critical and cultural relevant models of pedagogies by creating autonomous, learning spaces; linking community and classroom; and creating more democratic social relationships between teacher/students, faculty and undergraduates, researcher and participant, and schools/universities and community. The lesson to be drawn here is that educators must provide safe spaces where youths and adults can work collaboratively to self-author themselves. Teaching and learning should be based on critical and dialogic practice that values student and community knowledge.

In contrast to "teacher-dominated" or "traditional" pedagogical approaches, consultants are extending learner-centered approaches by not only transforming the traditional relationship between teacher and learner, but by recreating spaces modeled on neighborhood, home, family and community, or non traditional sites of learning (Levinson and Holland, 1996). Consultants are exploring in their educational praxis, how to create competing sites and spaces that will produce educated persons based on local cultural and epistemological forms (pp.14-15). Examples of these cultural forms are the cultural artifacts that these consultants drew from in enacting these new subjectivities: the *coyunturas* and *talleres* used by ASCR consultants, *pinto poetics* used by RSA and SOY consultants, and the personal stories and storytelling used by LGC consultants.

While LGC participants use story and storytelling as cultural artifacts rooted in local Mexicana/o culture, RSA educators use writing, and specifically poetry, as pedagogical tools to heal, empower and liberate youth self perception as a first step to individual and collective transformation. Participants are asked to write about their personal lives and struggles in school, home and neighborhood. Through this process of self-exploration, they also discover how to negotiate other home and community spaces.

This new consciousness developed through the act of writing is a form of cultural production that uses their personal stories and memories of struggle gives them voice and becomes the prelude to political change as a possibility, according to Richard Johnson (1986/1987). In the same way that PGuajardo sees the LGC, as creative and alternative space where individuals are provided the tools and a safe space to articulate voice, so does Resistencia function as informal learning space.

These practices represented more radical learner-centered curricula that contextualized learning and teaching that challenged normative schooling practices into new forms of traditional banking systems of education. The contemporary expressions of this educational model that Paulo Freire critiqued are the standardizing teaching and assessment practices introduced by the NCLB Act of 2001 for K-12 schools and the attempts to extend similar accountability measures to universities. These consultants model learner centered approaches that work to change traditional relationships between teacher and learner into more collaborative and productive relationships that ground authentic knowing not only in youth themselves but in community as well (MGuajardo interview, 3/2010).

This collaborative form of learning brings students, teachers and community together to form active communities of practice and reconstitute student subjectivities. This more democratic organization of schooling endeavors to create a community of equal learners and knowers. When learners are repositioned as teachers, researchers and knowledge producers, epistemological authority shifts to the student and towards a more collaborative or mentoring role. Educators need to continually recenter epistemological authority in their daily work that is sustained through collective practice with other educators. Lacking institutional support, educators should seek out these communities of

practice through internet and web technologies that can foster new forms of social networking to help sustain this emancipatory educational work.

New Cultural and Collective Identity Practices

Consultants imagined a Chicana/o Latina/o political and cultural identity not only because of a shared history, culture, or language, but also through strategic efforts to develop spaces and projects for political education that were central factors in creating conditions for these spaces for educational and political action. Consultants described pedagogical practices that lead to more agentic identity practices, transforming students from passive consumers of knowledge into more critical and engaged citizenry as researchers, knowledge producers and educators.

Learner-generated content represents a significant pedagogical resource and a shift towards authentic learning. For educators who are willing to enact real educational change, the practices of the LGC can provide important lessons that enable students to reframe their positioning as merely consumers of knowledge to full-fledged producers of knowledge. Students are enabled as co collaborators in the learning process as teacher, researcher and civic leader. But even beyond their critical pedagogical work, LGC participants propose a more radical ontology that extends mainstream perspectives about ways of being in the world: "The pedagogical contributions go beyond learning research skills; rather, the process emphasizes the role of youths and adults engaged in discovery and recovery of their community, their family, and themselves" (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2004; p. 505). By establishing more engaged and concrete linkages with local community, educators take this cultural relevant model of learning and research beyond

service learning models. When communities are actively involved in these practices, as true collaborators in this process, then authentic education can occur.

Storytelling as Pedagogical, Cultural and Political Practice

LGC consultants underscored how oral histories method and methodology forms the basis of their critical qualitative research. These local histories have been integrated in their curriculum where youth have captured and archived hundreds of stories. The collection of digitized stories respond to the effaced or undocumented history of conflict, bringing the past into the present, not only as a revised historiographic practice of recovery, but also to link that story of oppression to their political project to enact social change. "Critical personal narratives are counternarratives, testimonies, autoethnographies, performance texts (poetry), stories and accounts that disturb discourse by exposing the complexities and contradictions that exist under official history (Mutua and Swadener, qtd. in Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008; p. 14). This project reconstructs the spatial history of the South Texas valley and functions as form of counter narrative that raises political consciousness. According to Denzin, Lincoln and Smith (2008), stories and storytelling "The author "bears witness to social injustices experienced at the group level. It is always an indigenous project; for it presumes that the subaltern can speak, and does, with power and conviction, and firsthand experiences (p. 13).

These expressive forms, whether storytelling by the LGC or poetry and the writing of personal stories as it is employed in the SOY workshops are pedagogical tools used to heal, empower and liberate. Together they function as the core elements of their place based pedagogy that mediate their identity work in these spaces and their social justice activism.

Implications for Researchers

This study sought to build on critical, decolonial and feminist intellectual research traditions. My research process aimed for more collaboratory practices that were self-reflexive and inclusive as one way to challenge approaches to research that are historically individualist and hierarchical. Rather than objects of study, I saw my participants as consultants who were co-constructors of my data collection and contributing to the knowledge that would emerge from my study. In addition, I sought to ground my research approach in the very sites that I was examining, for their work as activist educators and researchers also sought to build in their daily practice these critical traditions as well.

Their practices sought a more grounded and emergent research process that drew from a myriad of traditions, that in sum might be viewed as theoretical approach and praxis for examining the linkages and relationships between cultural and socioeconomic localized identities and contemporary neoliberal globalization. This is an approach that resonates with Ritzer's macro/micro approach that the Guajardos have employed in their work at the LGC. It also combines local and transnational epistemological practices grounded in local and institutionalized struggles (Holland and Lave, 2001). These pedagogical and political practices also lead to peculiar identity practices as well, both individual and group as well.

All in all, I sought to examine how these practices in sum were perhaps instances of genuinely emancipatory approaches to qualitative research. At their most basic level, these critical traditions work to confront power at the levels of knowledge and practice by naming dominant ideological practices that structure university research practices. They

do so by challenging the epistemological authority of the individual researcher and the university as final arbiter of what constitutes legitimate knowledge production. It is for this reason that Smith (1999), for example, identifies scientific research and the university as a site of struggle for scholar activists engaged in challenging eurocentrism at its discursive roots. I sought to extend these traditions by naming and documenting how participants in these spaces themselves articulated their critique of those practices.

In summary, I found that researchers consider the following implications that emerged in my study: 1) a reconceptualization of the Chicano movement as an educational project; 2) that individual identity formation and practices can not be separated from collective work in the Chicana/o movement; 3) the research process must be deeply collaborative between researcher and participants.

Social Movements as Educational Projects

Researchers should approach the study of new social movement scholars like Touraine (1992), Castells (2006), Escobar (2008) and Whittier (1995) who argue that social movements should be rethought as knowledge projects. They articulate social movement as shared enactments of situated and vernacular epistemological forms of authority that challenge the mainstream academic discourses and education policy. We also need to rethink how we read new social movements as epistemological projects that advance a new critical hegemony. Consultants in these spaces have articulated more emancipatory projects based on reframed collective subjects/projects and postmodernist pedagogies founded on local, indigenous and decolonial discursive traditions. More fundamentally, these projects are extending critical traditions that work to decenter and unsettle our received and commonsensical perspectives of ways of knowing and being.

They propose more authentic forms based on autonomous and collaborative practices freed from settled ideas and from individualist neoliberal corporatist model.

Identity and Movement Can't Be Separated

Individual and collective identity practices are fundamentally linked as consultant and new social movement scholarship have posited. They argue that solidarities are formed around these shared epistemological and identity practices, as ideological formations in process where collective and social practices of knowing are developed in struggle. Eyerman and Jamison (1991), for example, argue that social movements are forms of practical activities in which new social and political identities are formed. Social movements are conceptualized as epistemological projects that show knowledge construction is "intrinsically social" and formed through collective, social practices of knowing. Collaborative research that engages local subaltern communities produces local knowledge, not that necessarily meets the outcomes of the ivory tower, but that addresses real social needs of the communities that the academy purports to serve.

This idea resonates with Holland and Lave (2001) who also argue that individual identities (history in person) are formed in local contentious struggle but always already in dialogue with institutionalized historical struggles (history in system). In the same way, I have attempted to demonstrate how these sites represent examples of local, situated discourses and practices that mediate expressions of "enduring struggles", the Chicana/o and EZLN movements for example, and participant's "historical subjectivities" as Chicana/o activist scholars. I documented how consultants drew from an array of social resources, indigenous and decolonial social movement, and critical residual Chicana/o movement discourses and practices to enact their critical pedagogies.

Place-based, pinto and insurgent pedagogies were reframed Chicana/o pedagogies were deployed by these educator activists to produce strong cultural and politicized subjectivities and identities.

Research Process as Deep Collaboration with Participants

My research study reaffirmed the power of collaborative approaches to research study that further democratizes the research process by challenging the epistemological authority of the intellectual and university. As I suggested above in their reframing of organic intellectualism, ASCR participants also pushed the boundaries of scholar research; ASCR referred to this new researcher positionality as "incarnate intellectualism," a research practice that is continually self reflexive of one's privileged status as academic in the community. Similarly, LGC research practice reverses researcher/subject dichotomy and makes the community, teacher and student the researcher. These "tactics of de-subjectivation" help guard against the danger of reinscribing those same colonial practices of mainstream research according to Florez (2003).

Also, contra the detached, objective and individual observer so highly valued in traditional research, these educators reposition themselves as connected, embodied, and collective subjects thoroughly enmeshed in local communities as grounded participant observers (Vargas, 2008) in local contentious struggles. This more radical collaborative research approach aims to democratize traditional practices. However, new more radical approaches in research practice tend to upset the university status quo and as such can work against them especially in disciplinary cultures that are male-dominated and where work is generally expected to be individualistic and independent as we have seen

described by consultants. This situation is even more inhospitable and alienating for activist oriented researchers who refuse to work within the existing structure and play by the rules of the game. Scholars need not to play by the institutional rules of the game, but instead need to reframe and rearticulate those rules along the politics and ethics of social justice that produces research to support educational and social change and not cater to the whims of the academy.

I documented consultant research practices that were cased on convivial, non-hierarchical and collective practices. These practices were based on local and indigenous theories and practices as suggested by Smith (1999) and others where methodologies and data collection are grounded in lived experiences of their research subjects. Research practice is reconstituted from participant observation to observant participation (Vargas, 2008) where research outcomes are linked to problem-based study and education based on an ethic of social justice. Consultants are motivated by the following research questions: What can activist research look like for students and for academics? What emerging theories and methods support education and community change? All three projects sought to broaden and remake acceptable forms of research methods and methodology that reinvigorated ethnographic practice (Marcus and Fischer, 1986; Rosaldo, 1993).

CONCLUSION

In summary, the implications I considered here are perhaps partial antidote to the challenges faced by scholar activist intellectuals who face the daily tensions of negotiating between academia and their social justice work in their communities. I discussed first how consultants have reframed their activist practice by thoroughly

linking educational and political work in their daily praxis. Consultants created alternative and autonomous institutional, social and cultural sites that facilitated more complexly figured self-representations to counter the erasures of difference of our subaltern Mexicana/o and Chicana/o communities and transform delimiting categories including individual and collective identity practices. To this end, they reframed critical and culturally relevant forms of pedagogy by proposing local and place-based approaches to teaching and learning. An important pedagogical form of that work included the use of stories and other narrative forms as important cultural tools used to empowering youth and communities. Third, my findings also suggested the importance of more radically emancipatory forms of researcher practices that value both local and transnational critical and indigenous cultures and knowledges. Perhaps, if considered in sum, these more liberatory practices can address the critique raised by Jacoby and Norrie above regarding academic leftists whose work has sublimated their more radical intentions as they say into "careers of perpetual criticism" (2000).

I suggested throughout my study how we might envision the work of participants in these sites representing epistemological or knowledge projects that challenge Eurocentric epistemological authority. These vernacular modes of being and knowing stand in opposition to dominant epistemological practices that have historically failed the Mexicana/o community in the schools and the academy. At one level, the valuing of Eurocentric forms over local, indigenous practices is played out in that they serve as institutional state apparati to reproduce social relations outside the schools. This is an aspect of subtractive forms of learning and teaching that predominate in low-income schools (Valenzuela, 1999). At another of level of institutional practices, the Guajardos critiqued the proliferation of research methodologies and teacher training based on

banking models of education tied to the logic of neoliberal class and racial domination and violence that I articulated above. And, as in the case of ASCR that refused the traditional apprenticeship model of graduate training and instead called for activist scholarhip based on a "Chicano public intellectual epistemology" (Callahan interview, 3/2010).

These new educational and political practices based on a more critical epistemology and ontology also meant jettisoning scientific and positivistic models of research in favor of emergent methodologies inspired by feminist, subaltern and postcolonial approaches. Rather than an idealized conception of teaching and research inquiry, their political project envisions a radical social epistemological project that seeks the sort of knowledge that people need and the conditions under which it ought to be produced and distributed. All three projects aim to broaden and remake acceptable forms of research methods and methodology that moves beyond epistemological blindness that characterizes such social scientific approaches and capture the complexity and messiness of reality that traditional approaches miss.

Consultant's educational and political work serves to illustrate how the locus of practice concerning activism has changed and how we can re/think activism for social justice and how that might inform our future action. They have responded by reclaiming some of the legacies and accomplishments of Chicana/o activism and are merging them with local and indigenous epistemes, and in critical and place-based pedagogies that are enabling new collectivities. This call for new language and different ways of knowing also disrupts traditional academic identities, detached, objective and individualist vs academic intellectualistt practice that are collective and collaborative and produce activist intellectuals grounded in local communities and where knowledge is produced through

collective struggle and engagement. We saw how consultants articulated these ideas in their theorizing and practice in spaces outside the academies and schools in alternative and autonomous sites of socialization and cultural production. Their radical project is thus marked by struggles over educational and political praxis and how they should be linked in their academic and community work and to the formation of a radical collective subject underscoring the importance of agentic identity formation in contentious struggle.

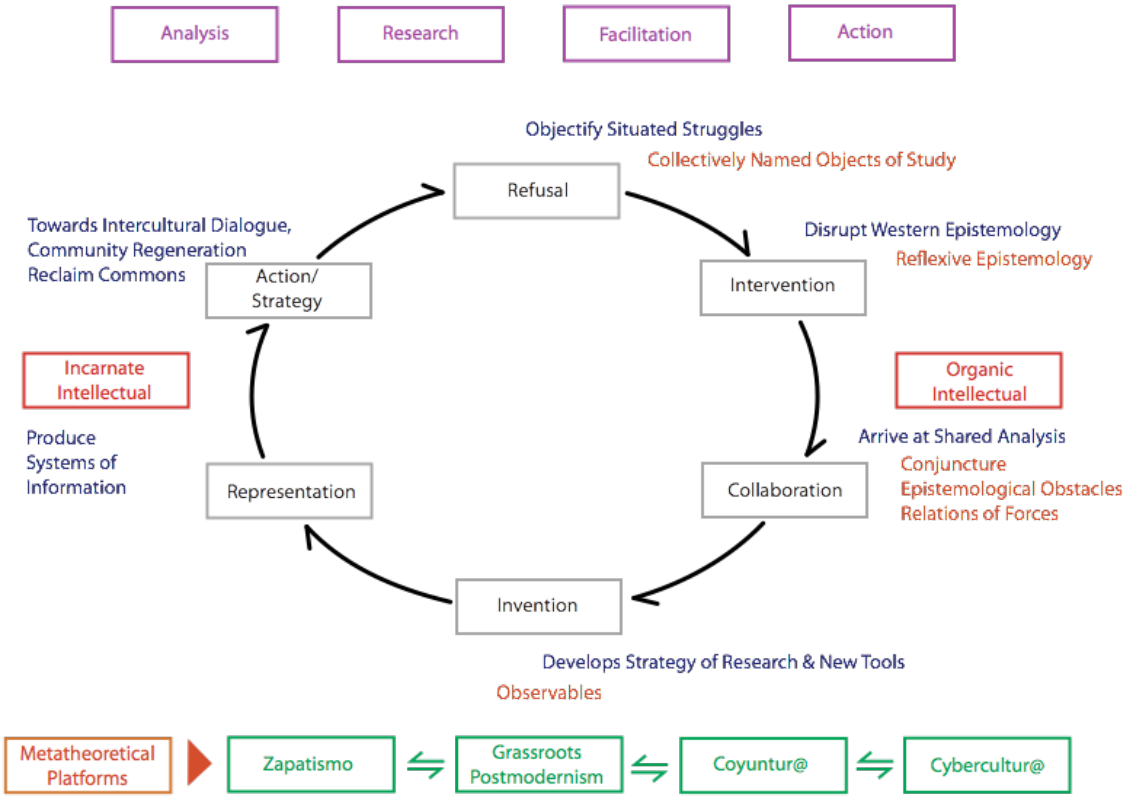
More specifically, these spaces enacted a counter-hegemonic praxis culturally and politically determinative in Chicana/o and Mexicana/o expressive practice. Consultants were from working class Chicana/o and Mexicana/o backgrounds and these lived experiences were further refined into critical subjectivities and identities in these spaces as I documented. However, their success was also due to their ability to successfully negotiate between two figured worlds of the academy/schools and communities and between these incommensurable spaces. These third, hybrid, and alternative spaces of enunciation provided safe spaces for multiple identity and intellectual practice that facilitated their organizational work. They were also safe spaces where consultants shared personal stories of the daily challenges they faced and where they could collectively work through these experiences. Working through experiences of cultural difference collaboratively can elicit an emerging sense of injustice according to Escobar (2008) that can lead to an incipient dimension of collective action. We saw the power of stories in LGC work that consultants shared with me and documented by the reflective essays that Miguel and Francisco Guajardo have written. As Delgado Bernal (2002) posits, storytelling allows educators to "better understand and appreciate the unique experiences and responses of students of color through a deliberate, conscious, and open type of listening" (p. 116). They capture the transformative effect of cultural resources and assets

that can be drawn from local "funds of knowledge" to enact social and educational change in one's communities and where a nascent and emergent political consciousness could be nurtured.

Consultants link research and knowledge production to collective development and leadership as the Guajardos explain drawing on Smith's (1999) indigenous work: "In Smith's nomenclature, we decolonize the research process to respond to the strengths and particular needs of the local community. This disruption of the traditional paradigm creates space for new voices to surface and to contribute to a new method for documentation and knowledge creation" (Guajardo and Guajardo, 2008; p. 8). Escobar (2008) reminds us that these forms of pedagogy and research study make us "history makers," active agents who are fundamentally transforming ways of knowing and being: "humans live at their best when engaged in history making, meaning the ability to engage in the ontological act of disclosing new ways of being, of transforming the ways in which they understand and deal with themselves and the world (p. 235). Grounded in place-based teaching and learning, these pedagogies evoke an "intense engagement with a place and collectivity," where "place-based activists, intellectuals and common people do not act as detached contributors to the public debate" (p. 235).

Appendix A

Figure 1 below represents the process of convivial research as articulated by participants of the ASCR. This graphic represents their strategy of convivial research that attempts to disrupt traditional and individualized forms of research and analysis founded on traditional research practices. This conceptual framework extends critical practice as well by extending this work towards even more democratically collaborative practice. Convivial practice borrows from many traditions including Wenger (2000) and his epistemological understanding of learning and impact on identity formations of individuals and groups. His analysis underscores the dialogical and dialectical relationships between pedagogical, political and identity practice: "A framework for understanding social learning systems must make it possible to understand learning as a social process. What is learning from a social perspective? And what are the processes by which our learning constitutes social systems and social identities?"(p. 226)


Analysis
Research
Facilitation
Action
Objectify Situated Struggles
Collectively Named Objects of Study
Refusal
Disrupt Western Epistemology
Reflexive Epistemology
Intervention
Towards Intercultural Dialogue,
Community Regeneration
Reclaim Commons
Action/
Strategy
Incarnate
Intellectual
Organic
Intellectual
Produce
Systems of
Information
Arrive at Shared Analysis
Conjuncture
Epistemological Obstacles
Relations of Forces
Representation
Collaboration
Invention
Develops Strategy of Research & New Tools
Observables
Metatheoretical
Platforms
Zapatismo
Grassroots
Postmodernism
Coyuntur@
Cybercultur@

Appendix B

Llano Grande Center Core Principles

The Llano Grande Center for Research and Development, a school- and community-based nonprofit organization is based in Edcouch-Elsa High School in rural South Texas and believes in the following principle: place—i.e., local people, local stories, and local history and culture; relationships, particularly meaningful relationships between youths and adults, in which one can mentor another and each learns form others; the assets of people and community as qualities through which to approach individual- and community-development work; resiliency of people, in their ability to overcome obstacles and to find meaning in life; building a sense of hope for children families and the community at large; civic engagement as a critical practice necessary to cultivate vibrant and just communities, and the Center views civic participation as an essential process that allows us to maintain the promise of democracy" (FGuajardo and LGC Fellows, 2011, p. 74).

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